GUARDIAN WEEKLY
April 28 1996

Athletics London Marathon

Great Scot! McColgan eyes Atlanta after London blitz

Stephen Bierley

TWO and a half years ago Liz McColgan, the former world 10,000 metres champion and Olympic silver medal winner, was told she would never run again. On Sunday her restoration as Britain's leading female distance runner was completed in joyous fashion when she won the London Marathon and then immediately turned her thoughts to a gold medal in the Olympic Games at Atlanta.

McColgan's unbending determination to get back to the top, after a double knee operation almost ended her running career, has been a remarkable story of single-minded resilience and resolution. Indeed, such had been her pursuit of renewed success that she all but ran herself to a grinding, exhausted halt.

Then, after finishing fifth in this race last year, the 31-year-old Scot turned to Grete Waitz for help. Waitz, the legendary Norwegian distance runner, cut back McColgan's murderous training schedule, substituting quality for quantity.

Waitz's immediate influence was there for all to see when McColgan finished first in the Great North Run last September. "I was so fortunate to have met my athletic heroine and to have her as my coach," said McColgan, who judged Sunday's dominant victory in 2hr 27min 54sec almost to perfection.

The men's winner, for an unprecedented third consecutive time, was Mexico's Dionicio Ceron in 2hr 10min 0sec. There was further good news for Britain when Paul Evans finished third, 40 seconds behind Ceron, although he remains unsure about running the Olympic marathon.

This was the hottest London race on record, the buds on the trees seeming visibly to fatten as more than 26,000 runners flew, flogged, or jogged their way through the streets. For the élite and novice alike the conditions were far from ideal, and pre-race thoughts of ultra-fast times were quickly shelved.

McColgan's win was not without a scare, for early on three runners, Norway's Anita Haakenstad, Russia's Firaya Sultanova and Jane Salumae of Estonia, were pulling away. After 14 miles Haakenstad led by two minutes over McColgan.

"If I had been Liz I would not have allowed such a gap to develop," said Waitz, who later admitted to being more than a little "nervous" at the way the race developed.

"I got a bit of a fright when I lost sight of the leaders," said McColgan, who conceded that at the halfway stage she had not felt particularly good. "But as soon as I made the effort to get on terms I began to feel much better."

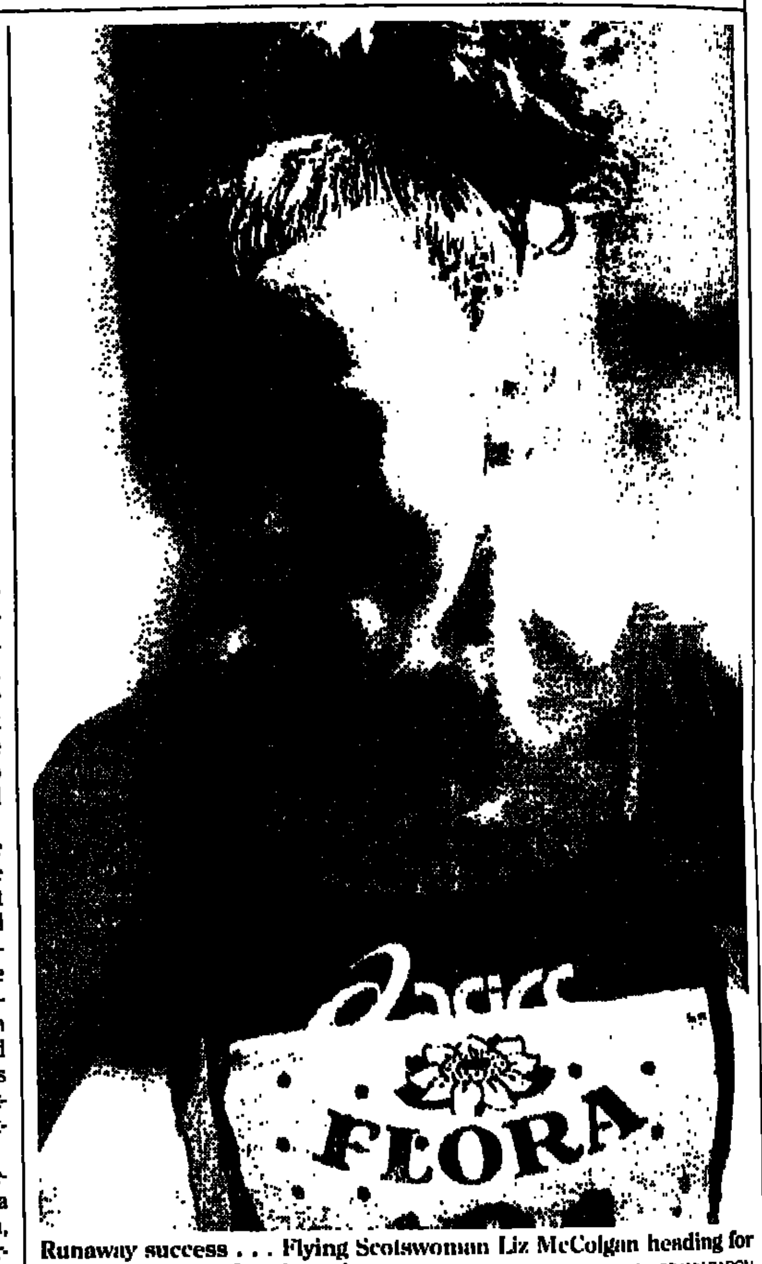
Slowly, but with an absolute inevitability, McColgan began to reel in her opponents. There is always some sadness when a lone leader, on this occasion running out of her skin, begins to fragment as this most cruel of distances takes its revenge on those who push themselves just a little too far.

McColgan, who earned in the region of £150,000 for this victory (her third marathon win in six starts), overtook Haakenstad after 20 miles, never so much as glancing at the wilting Norwegian, who eventually finished fifth.

"By 17 miles I knew I was going to close the gap, but you can never take anything for granted," said McColgan. "At this point a little girl ran out on the course and I might have tripped. You just never know." But the Scot's victory was inexorable and she finished more than two minutes ahead of the second-placed Joyce Chepchumba, of Kenya.

The men's race followed a more expected pattern, with the favourites running, for the most part, in a tight swarm until the final couple of miles. Then Ceron, in yellow and black, took off like some turbo-charged bee. Belgium's Vincent Rousseau, the fastest man in the field but with a much publicised dislike of a rising thermometer, was incapable of responding to the Mexican's startling acceleration and settled for second place.

The race for third spot was between Evans and Jackson Kabiga, a little-known 19-year-old Kenyan, whose late pushing of the pace certainly aided Ceron's victory.



Runaway success . . . Flying Scotswoman Liz McColgan heading for her first London Marathon victory PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

Cryptic crossword by Araucaria

Across

1 Kurdistan certainly has a lot of space (8)
5 That goose look? (6)
9, 10 One certainly is a bit lacking in the fashion for adventure (8,6)
12 Died in prison — try to get money (5)
13 Vessel in reactor to come down in Mausoleum country (9)
14 Old soldier's taken prisoner, back part in front (12)
18 Picture of one left by purge (12)
21 Vendee's satisfied comment about hunt (9)
23 Tree insect's companion (5)
24 Sense utter fool's inside (6)
25 Is there a faint possibility gown is on crooked? (8)
26 Decide to colonise (6)
27 Diarist to go from Douglas to Peel? (8)

Down

1 Remove from the aide-de-camp (6)
2, 3 Walking out since the lady is, hold it there! (6,2,3,4)
4 Single pet at old city is in a fix over the top drawer (12)
6 Latin skill applied to crime (5)
7 Harangue to help rising clan (8)
8 Blushing, as opposed to pale-skinned in North America (3-5)
11 Incendiary device — put a lot of jewels right into river (5-7)
15 Agitated for lower and upper garments to be shortened (9)
16 What God does comes to an end without concessions being raised (8)
17 Pipe through which blood goes round inside (8)
19 Edward I's hesitating, having no interest (6)
20 Japanese ruler has weapon with bone sawn off (6)
22 Keen on the Spanish pub (5)

Last week's solution

Football Endsleigh League

Sunderland upwardly mobile

KEVIN KEEGAN did it with Newcastle in 1993, Bryan Robson did it with Middlesbrough in 1995, and Peter Reid has now done it with Sunderland in 1996. In their first full seasons of management in the North-east all three have taken their clubs to automatic promotion.

Reid heard the news as he watched the Darlington-Bury match on Saturday; and judging by his unshaven appearance he had already done his celebrating. Sunday's game against Stoke was, therefore, viewed more as a Roker party than a serious match. The sun had got its hat on, the still-terraced Fulwell End was decked out in flags and looked like the Anfield Kop of old, and numerous camcorders recorded it all.

But the lacklustre goalless draw was something of an anti-climax and means Sunderland now require a point at home to West Bromwich on Saturday to clinch the championship.

Swindon also moved up, into the First Division, as a result of their 1-1 draw at Blackpool.

Results and leading positions

ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE: First Division: Derby 1, Birmingham 1; Grimsby 0, Sheffield Utd 2; Leicester 2, Huddersfield 1; Luton 0, Watford 0; Millwall 0, Oldham 1; Norwich 2, West Brom 2; Port Vale 1, Tranmere 1; Portsmouth 0, Barnsley 0; Reading 0, Charlton 0; Sunderland 0, Stoke 0; Southend 2, Ipswich 1; Wolverhampton 0, Crystal Palace 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Sunderland (played 44, points 82); 2, Derby (44-76); 3, Crystal Palace (44-75).

Second Division: Blackpool 1, Swindon 1; Bournemouth 0, Walsall 0; Bradford City 2, Chesterfield 1; Brighton 1, Carlisle 0; Bristol C 0, Oxford Utd 2; Crewe 0, Rotherham 2; Notts Co 1, Burnley 1; Peterborough 0, Bristol Rovers 0; Shrewsbury 2, Brentford 1; Stockport 3, York 0; Wrexham 5, Hull 0; Wycombe 0, Swansea 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Swindon (42-84); 2, Blackpool (44-79); 3, Oxford Utd (43-74).

Third Division: Cardiff 0, Plymouth 1; Darlington 4, Bury 0; Doncaster 1, Barnet 0; Exeter 2, Colchester 2; Fulham 1, Wigan 0; Hartlepool 3, Lincoln 0; Leyton Orient 0, Preston NE 2; Mansfield 1, Hereford 2; Northampton 1, Gillingham 1; Rochdale 1, Scunthorpe 1; Scarborough 2, Cambridge United 0; Torquay 1, Chester 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Preston NE (44-80); 2, Gillingham (44-79); 3, Bury (44-75).

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Premier Division: Aberdeen 1, Hearts 1; Celtic 4, Falkirk 0; Hibernian 1, Raith 1; Kilmarnock 2, Partick 1; Motherwell 1, Rangers 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Rangers (34-81); 2, Celtic (34-77); 3, Aberdeen (34-52).

First Division: Dundee 3, Clydebank 0; Dunfermline 4, Dumbarton 1; Greenock Morton 1, St Johnstone 0; St Mirren 2, Airdrie 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Dunfermline (34-66); 2, Dundee United (33-63); 3, Greenock Morton (34-63).

Second Division: Berwick 1, Stranraer 0; Clyde 2, Ayr 0; East Fife 1, Forfar 0; Montrose 0, Stirling 3; Stenhousemuir 1, Queen of South 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Stirling (34-75); 2, East Fife (34-67); 3, Berwick (34-57).

Third Division: Alloa 0, Brechin 3; Arbroath 1, Ross County 1; Caledonian Thistle 1, Albion 1; East Stirling 1, Cowdenbeath 1; Queen's Pk 0, Livingston 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Livingston (34-66); 2, Brechin (34-63); 3, Caledonian Thistle (34-54).



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Christopher brokers end to Lebanon firefight

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

AFTER 16 days of merciless long-range warfare across the border between Israel and Lebanon by missile, air strike and artillery, a ceasefire was finally announced simultaneously in Jerusalem and Beirut last week.

More than 150 Lebanese have been killed in the Israeli onslaught, which has driven out an estimated 400,000 refugees.

Hundreds of Katyusha rockets were fired into Israel by the pro-Iranian guerrillas of Hizbullah. About 60 Israelis have been reported wounded, mostly with shock, and thousands have fled the barrages.

The deal — formally, only between Israel and Lebanon, and not signed by any of the parties — was brokered by the United States secretary of state, Warren Christopher, and France's foreign minister, Hervé de Charette. It bans future targeting of civilians.

"We have achieved the goal of our mission, which was to achieve an agreement that will save lives and end the suffering of people on both sides of the Israeli-Lebanon border," Mr Christopher said in Jerusalem. "These understandings take us well beyond the oral understandings that I negotiated in July 1993."

In Washington, the US president, Bill Clinton, said: "Because it is in writing, this agreement will be less likely to break down than the informal agreements that had been in place since 1993." Mr Clinton urged a return to the task of building a "comprehensive and lasting peace" in the Middle East.

Israel's prime minister, Shimon Peres, said: "It is a tremendous achievement for the Israeli army. Israel comes out of this calmer and stronger."

But Benjamin Netanyahu, Mr Peres's rightwing challenger in polls on May 29, said: "I'm afraid none of the major goals that the government set for itself have been achieved."

The ceasefire will be monitored by an international group, including Israel, Lebanon, the US, France and, significantly, Syria. Mr Christopher's frantic shuttle mission successfully drew Syria's president, Hafez al-Assad, the leading power-broker in Lebanon, into the peace-making process.

President Assad has secured US and Israeli commitment to an early resumption of peace talks, to focus on the return to Syria of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. Talks between Lebanon and Israel will also be advanced, focusing on ways to end the occupation of south Lebanon.

Israel's assault on Lebanon began two days after a barrage of Katyusha missiles on April 9. On April 18, six Israeli shells hit a United Nations military compound full of refugees. More than 100 Lebanese were killed. A mass funeral of the victims of that attack took place on Tuesday.

The massacre caused international revulsion, and prompted Mr Clinton to order the US secretary of state into action. The resulting shuttle has produced an ingenious face-saving formula.

The accord says the five-nation monitoring group will deal with complaints about violations. In addition, a wider international consultative group will meet to aid the reconstruction of Lebanon.

Israel has failed notably to secure a Hizbullah commitment to end attacks in occupied south Lebanon.

Hizbullah has secured a tacit acknowledgement that its resistance to the occupation can continue. Lebanon has seen the occupation issue rise up the agenda, and Syria has gained centre stage in the peace process.

Comment, page 12
Washington Post, page 15

Massacre prompts review of gun laws

Christopher Zinn in Canberra

THE Australian prime minister, John Howard, promised to fight for tougher gun laws and ordered an emergency meeting of state and federal police ministers in the wake of the Tasmanian massacre on Sunday in which 35 people died. Nineteen others were wounded.

Martin Bryant, a 28-year-old man with a history of psychological problems, was identified on Monday as the lone gunman who went on a shooting spree in the quiet tourist resort of Port Arthur, in the Australian island state. Bryant has been charged with one count of murder in the Royal Hobart Hospital, where he is under police guard. Police expect to lay more charges.

The meeting Mr Howard has called will try to formulate effective national uniform gun laws. "I will do everything humanly possible, and the federal government will do everything humanly possible, to get an effective tightening of the gun control situation in this country," the prime minister said after an ecumenical service for the victims.




Martin Bryant, named as the 28-year-old gunman

However, the powerful gun lobby has already warned that the proposed ban on semi-automatic weapons — such as those used in the Port Arthur attack — and the proposals for uniform licensing and a national register of firearms owners would not work.

John Tingle, a state MP for the New South Wales Shooters' Party, said all the recent massacres in Australia had been carried out by those already outside the law. "Laws are not going to stop this sort of thing happening as you can't legislate against insanity," he said.

In Australia gun control is a state, and not a national, responsibility and the six states have consistently failed to agree uniform legislation.

While Western Australia might have the strongest controls on gun ownership, its citizens have only to go to Tasmania where, with a minimum of formalities, they can buy anything up to a machine-gun.

The Coalition for Gun Control's co-ordinator in Tasmania, Roland Browne, said the state's lax gun laws were the legacy of a strong rural sector to which both sides of politics had pandered.

There are estimated to be more than 3.5 million firearms in Australia, for a population of 18 million, and more than 500 gun-related deaths every year.

As details emerged of the shadowy world of Bryant, who lived in a suburb of Hobart, police said he had never held a gun licence and had no known links with firearms. But former neighbours said he had terrified them with his fondness for guns. He was also said to have violent mood swings.

According to witnesses, the gunman, described as having blond hair and looking like a "surfie", drove into Port Arthur. He wandered up to the Broadarrow cafeteria in Port Arthur village, chatted with tourists and commented: "There's a lot of Wasps [White Anglo-Saxon Protestants] around today, there's not many Japs here are there?"

Witnesses say he then entered the cafeteria, produced a gun and began firing. He tried setting fire to the building and then wandered about the historic site firing.

He shot a woman and her daughters aged six and three before commandeering a car and killing its four occupants. The gunman then drove around shooting at tourists, and at a nearby general store.

Minutes later, he abandoned his vehicle and entered the Fox and Hounds Hotel, which was crowded. After shooting he took some hostages and ordered them into the nearby Seascape guest house. The entire shooting spree is thought to have lasted about an hour.

After a siege lasting 18 hours, the cottage caught fire. Bryant staggered out. The three hostages in the guest house died in the fire.

Police said Bryant dropped two assault rifles as he fled — a military-type AR-15 Armalite and a Chinese SKS-46. Both were fitted with two 30-round magazines end to end. He was taken to hospital on a stretcher, with burns to his back.

There are still no clues as to a motive for possibly the worst peace-time massacre by a single gunman in recent history. The dead ranged in age from three to 72. Most of the dead are Australians, but two Malaysian tourists and two unidentified visitors were also killed. A New Zealand winemaker, Jason Winter, aged 29, died when he threw himself in front of his wife Jo and 15-month-old son Mitchell.

One survivor, Ellie Webb, said: "I can't believe it, this is Tasmania. You expect this in America, you see it in the news all the time; maybe Sydney but not Tassie."

Comment, page 12

A victim of the Port Arthur massacre is taken to Hobart hospital by air ambulance PHOTOGRAPH: KIM EISZELE

Austria	AS30	Malta	45c
Belgium	BF75	Netherlands	G 4.75
Denmark	DK16	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 13	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.50
Germany	DM 4	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 400	Sweden	SK 19
Italy	L 3,000	Switzerland	SF 3.30

Lebanon the real victim of clumsy Israeli aggression

IF ISRAEL'S prime minister, Shimon Peres, embarked on Operation Grapes of Wrath in order to promote his tough-guy image during an election year in Israel, he has also contributed to the election campaign of Hizbullah in Lebanon's forthcoming parliamentary elections (Assad ups price of Lebanon ceasefire, April 28). Israel is now prepared to reach another version of the 1993 understanding with Hizbullah but this time elevating it to a written agreement, thus granting Hizbullah near-state status. If this was not Israel's initial objective, we must recognise that Operation Grapes of Wrath was a tragic flop.

According to the logic governing the present diplomatic process, Syria has also to be a signatory to the agreement along with Hizbullah, at the insistence of Israel. The reason given is that Syria is a major power in the area, controls decisions in Lebanon, and is the real force, along with Iran, behind Hizbullah.

If Israel's claim that Syria uses the Hizbullah card to fine-tune the security situation in line with its interests is true, then signing an agreement with both Syria and Hizbullah, to the exclusion of Lebanon, is an indication to both Syria and Hizbullah that playing such a card will remain effective in the future.

The international priority seems to be to save prime minister Peres from the mess he has landed himself in and find a face-saving formula before the Israeli elections. What should be the priority is to save the real victim, Lebanon, from the brutal clumsiness of its southern neighbour and to find a long-term solution which would restore its authority over its occupied territory. Hizbullah would then be disarmed and remain as a political party in Lebanon's parliament.
Nadim Shehadi,
Centre for Lebanese Studies, Oxford

DO THE Israelis ever pause to wonder why places like Ain el-Hilweh camp, which they bombed during Operation Grapes of Wrath, contain many Hizbullah supporters? I visited Ain el-Hilweh — and Bourj al-Berajneh and Shatila camps — in November. I met families squatting in tiny one-room homes in a dilapidated hospital building: more than 100 families, with five toilets, five cookers, and five sinks between them, fetching their water from a tap outside. I saw people living in bombed buildings with no external walls.

Lebanon's Palestinian refugees must be some of the world's most marginalised people. Most are effectively stateless; they have minimal access to employment; their housing conditions are appalling, and the dread of eviction ever-present. They also have an achingly powerful dream of the home where they, or their parents or grandparents, once lived. And they have been watching a peace process unfold south of the border which seems to ignore their plight.

Of course supporting Hizbullah seems attractive — 50 years on, no one else seems to be offering them any hope of things ever changing. Bombing Ain el-Hilweh does not change anything either — it just increases hatred all round.
Pat Simmons,
Headington, Oxford

THE Israeli massacres in Lebanon and the muted response of the "world leaders" are enough to turn my Jewish stomach.

The Hizbullah, for all their Islamic fundamentalist babble (which is no worse than the Jewish fundamentalist babble of growing numbers of Israelis), are the legitimate inhabitants of southern Lebanon, fighting an invader/oppressor who has been sitting on their back at least since 1982. All they want is get the Israelis out of their land. They are, of course, no match militarily.

The Israelis, on the other hand, mounted a brutal invasion in 1982 with the goal of installing a Christian puppet regime subservient to them. After tens of thousands of Lebanese and a few hundred Israelis were killed in an endeavour that even the Israeli public turned against, they had to withdraw ignominiously, and the late prime minister Begin, who — compared to his successors — was a relatively decent man, resigned in despair.

Now, 14 years later, they are still holding on to a sizeable chunk of southern Lebanon, terrorising the population, and maintaining a mercenary private army there.

Has it not occurred to anyone to just say to the Israelis: "Get the hell out of occupied Lebanon and stay out".
Miriam M Abileah,
Toronto, Canada

ONCE again the shameful double standards of the West in its treatment of the two sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict have become all too transparent.

If international law and standards of behaviour are perceived to have been broken by Arab or Muslim countries such as Libya, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan, the full might of the Western alliance and the UN is brought to bear on these countries. When, however, the Israelis behave in a barbaric and disproportionate manner, the United States blocks even a statement of censure in the UN Security Council.

Is it any surprise, then, that the Americans and Western governments are held in utter contempt throughout the Arab and Muslim world?
(Dr) Navidul Haq Khan,
Romford, Essex

Di-straction from medical needs

PRINCESS DIANA'S fascination with watching cardiac surgery being performed on children may make for interesting footage but is an exercise in how to achieve minimal health gains at maximal cost.

The thousands of pounds it costs to bring a single child from Africa to Britain are thousands of pounds made unavailable to the other agencies competing for charitable donations to support diverse preventive programmes in developing countries.

Millions of children across the globe remain at risk from serious cardiac disorders which are readily prevented or treated by simple, cheap and widely available measures; examples include pest control to prevent Chaga's disease, treating sore throats and skin infections with penicillin to prevent rheumatic fever, and ensuring adequate nutrition for pregnant women to reduce the likelihood of cardiovascular disease in their offspring. Funding such interventions may be dependent on charitable contributions.

No one doubts the wonder of modern cardiac surgery, nor would any begrudge a child receiving curative treatment but make no mistake, preventive medicine may not attack the photo-opportunities nor the vainglorious but offers the best chance of life for the most children in poor countries.
(Dr) Paul Heaton,
New Plymouth, New Zealand

Hiding behind a Confucian lie

IN CHINA, street vendors have a saying: Anyone can fool a foreigner. Judging by the growing number of gullible observers who parrot its propaganda, this adage might well serve as the motto of the Chinese Communist Party.

Fred Ryan (Washington Post, April 21) suggests that China's lack of democracy is understandable given the context. Only an authoritarian government, he implies, can achieve the "monumental task" of keeping the empire's huge population "alive, healthy, and eating well".

This is the same tired line that China's leaders deliver whenever they try to defend their abysmal human rights record. China, these leaders insist, is such an overpopulated, developing country it cannot "afford" human rights.

Journalists seldom challenge the reasoning behind these statements. What, after all, is the logical connection between repression and development? By what formula do political detention and torture make a society richer?

The empirical evidence is every bit as shaky. How, for example, can India, despite being an overpopulated, developing country, "afford" its elections and its free press? And will these same Chinese leaders explain why, during the days of Mao Zedong, when the state was at its most totalitarian, food was always scarce and tens of millions of Chinese people starved in horrible famines?

The truth is, the extraordinary economic revolution happening in China today stems directly from the removal of bureaucratic controls.

The patronising doctrine that a strong government is needed to "look after the people" was introduced by Confucius. It is a 2,500-year-old lie. As the Chinese people are demonstrating at long last, they are perfectly capable of looking after themselves, thank you very much.
Patrick Kavanagh,
Ottawa, Canada

Labour needs good neighbours

TONY BLAIR has identified himself as both a Christian and a supporter of communitarianism, ie, that people look after members of their own community. This is obviously an improvement on the present climate of "rampant individualism" but is hardly Christ-like. Jesus was an advocate of "neighbourism", in which he defined a neighbour as *anyone* in need, and illustrated his point with the story of the Good Samaritan.

I would be reassured to hear some rhetoric from the Labour party in favour of rampant neighbourism for the marginalised communities in which people do not have the resources to meet each other's needs.
Margaret Oertig-Davidson,
Riehen, Switzerland

Briefly

KUDOS to Maggie O'Kane (April 21) for the feature on Adi Roche, a remarkable woman whom I met in March during a Chernobyl congress in Minsk. The $3 million convoy which left Dublin recently also arrived in Minsk to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster. That being the case, one wonders at your headline "To Russia with love". The republic of Bielarus, whatever the wishes of its own president, is still at present an independent state. Moreover, it received more than 60 per cent of the radioactive fallout in the former Soviet Union, which has contaminated one-fifth of its territory.
(Prof) David R Marples,
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

THE Rev Robert Faser (April 21) asked whether we could imagine Jesus voting for a rightwing party. The parable of the pounds suggests that he might (Luke, 19:11). A noble man left 10 servants with a pound each and told them to do business. On his return, he praised those who had made a profit. The man who had wrapped his pound safely in linen was rebuked and called a "wicked servant". His pound was taken from him and given to the man who had made the most profit.

When questioned, Jesus said: "I tell you, to everyone who has will be given more; but, from the man who has not, even that which he has will be taken away."
Paul Green,
St Albert, Alberta, Canada

SIMON HOGGART (Mother of misfortunes, April 28) censures the Queen for being "inflexible" and for "living in a world of her own", but monarchs are like that. It is the institution which is ridiculous.
Harry Davis,
Thames Ditton, Surrey

THE YOUNG bigot quoted in your Washington Post story about the exodus from Montreal (April 7) is in for a big surprise when he reaches Vancouver: signs everywhere in Chinese and Japanese, many languages spoken in virtually every public place. The difference is that on the west coast we aren't trying to legislate cultural conformity.
C J Murray,
Vancouver, Canada

MARTIN WALKER (April 21) twice uses the ethnic diminutive "Brit". Would the Guardian Weekly permit "Jap" in a similar context? As a former Briton, now a US citizen, I urge you to add "Brit" to your computer file of unacceptable words — and please do not supplant it with "limey".
David G Onn,
Newark, Delaware, USA

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Serbs attack returning Muslims

Julian Borger in Sarajevo

THE simmering conflict between Muslim and Serb civilians over the right to cross Bosnia's ethnic dividing line turned bloody on Monday, as clashes between rival crowds showed signs of escalating beyond the control of Nato's peacekeeping force.

Near the village of Sjenina, about 100km north of Sarajevo, two Muslims were shot dead and a number of others injured after being attacked by a Serb crowd.

Outside Trnovo, 16km south of Sarajevo, 15 Muslims were taken to hospital after the buses they were travelling in were stoned by a group of angry Serbs.

In both incidents the Muslims had been trying to visit family graves in Serb-controlled territory. The Serbs, determined to maintain the country's ethnic partition, were trying to prevent the visits. In both cases, troops from the Nato-led peace Implementation Force (I-for) were near the scene.

According to Major Terje Myklevoll, a Nato spokesman in Doboj, near Sjenina, a group of Muslims trying to visit the Serb-controlled village was turned back by a checkpoint, but tried to bypass the Nato soldiers on a country road.

Denis Hajric, who was among those who tried to cross, told reporters: "We had two people killed and two wounded. A Serb fired his pistol into the chest of one of our men and killed him and another man was shot and killed too. We ran away and a woman stepped on a mine. Also there was a man wounded in the head."



Under siege . . . A group of Serbs stone a bus carrying Muslims near Serb-held Trnovo, 16km south of Sarajevo. Fifteen Muslims were taken to hospital after the incident

A Nato spokesman said seven dead or wounded had been evacuated by helicopter, and five more were known to be still in the minefield.

Fifteen Muslims were injured when the buses they were travelling in near Trnovo were set upon by a crowd of Serbs wielding stones, clubs and shovels.

Bosnian Serbs attempted to restrain the Serb protesters but were unsuccessful. An eyewitness report said French troops escorting the buses with tanks did not intervene.

The Muslims turned back to Sarajevo where they staged a protest outside the offices of the international community's high representative in Bosnia, Carl Bildt.

Major Simon Haselock, a Nato spokesman in Sarajevo, said: "This is something that we have been concerned about . . . There will be an immediate imperative to talk to the highest authorities on both sides. That is all we can do at the moment."

● Serbia tried to fend off charges of genocide on Monday at the International Court of Human Rights in The Hague. In a new round of hearings, Serbian representatives insisted the country had played no part in the Bosnian war and challenged the court's jurisdiction.

Meanwhile in New York, the president of the UN war crimes tribunal has complained to the Security Council that Serbia's government has failed to carry out arrest warrants against three men accused of murdering 260 people after the eastern Croatian city of Vukovar fell in November 1991.

It was the first time the tribunal had lodged such a complaint against any of the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

Bus bomb kills 37 in Punjab

Gerald Bourke in Islamabad

AT LEAST 37 people died and 26 were injured in Pakistan on Sunday when a bomb exploded on a bus packed with Muslims travelling home to celebrate Islam's holiest holiday.

The blast, in the eastern province of Punjab, occurred as the bus was pulling away from a marketplace in Bhai Pheru, 80km southwest of the provincial capital Lahore. Witnesses said it ignited the fuel tank, transforming the vehicle into an inferno that trapped screaming passengers inside.

Onlookers watched helplessly as the bus was consumed by flames. They said most of its doors and windows were closed and there were no fire extinguishers.

The blaze spread so fast that two children sitting on the dashboard by an open window died. The driver escaped through the window, but was badly burned.

Most of the dead were charred beyond recognition. Their ashes were collected and placed in a single coffin which was buried at Bhai Pheru's cemetery after a mass funeral.

Police said the death toll could rise, as many of the injured suffered severe burns.

A second explosive device was found shortly afterwards in the same marketplace, which was crowded with shoppers before Eid al-Adha, the Muslim festival on Monday marking the end of the Haj pilgrimage. It was defused by bomb disposal experts.

No one claimed responsibility for the bombing, the latest — and worst — of dozens of atrocities in the past few months in Punjab, the country's most populous and politically important province.

Last week, a blast at a cinema in the central city of Sargodha injured 12 people. The United States consulate in Lahore was also damaged in a grenade attack. Last month a bomb explosion killed six at a cancer hospital in Lahore built by the Pakistani cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan.

The prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, said afterwards that her government had received intelligence reports warning of further explosions in Punjab.

The Pakistani opposition leader Nawaz Sharif accused Ms Bhutto on Monday of failing to maintain law and order after the blast. "The government has failed to control law and order," he said. Arif Nakai, Punjab's chief minister, blamed Sunday's bombing on "terrorists" and said those responsible would be brought to justice: "The government will not be cowed down by such dastardly acts."

● The former Pakistan cricket captain, Imran Khan, officially entered politics, ending months of speculation, by announcing the formation of the Movement for Justice at a press conference in Lahore.

Whitewater 'cover-up'

Martin Walker in Washington

THE White House is dismayed by the discovery of Hillary Clinton's fingerprints on crucial and long-lost documents, a discovery which has reignited the Whitewater affair just as public interest and political dangers seemed to be ebbing.

The fingerprints undermine the First Lady's credibility with the United States public. They also excite suspicion that she may be directly linked to a cover-up over her legal responsibilities for Whitewater, which could carry criminal penalties.

The suspicion of having misled Congress is one that proved fatal in previous political scandals, from Watergate to Iran-Contra.

The fingerprinted documents, a set of billing records for Mrs Clinton's work as a partner of the Rose Law Firm in Arkansas in the 1980s, were said to be lost when congressional committees demanded to see them.

Then, in one of the least credible incidents of the Whitewater affair, the documents were said to have inexplicably reappeared on a table beside an office in the White House private quarters used by Mrs Clinton.

Senior White House figures were deeply alarmed by the discovery, reported in Newsweek magazine and confirmed by FBI sources. This alarm was less for the substance of the records than the likely public perception, and its exploitation by the Republicans.

They also fear that the deliberate leak, just as President Bill Clinton gave videotaped evidence in the trial of his partner on the Whitewater property venture, suggests malice against the Clintons within the FBI, or on the staff of the independent counsel charged with the inquiry.

Mr Clinton's political aides had been increasingly confident that the public was bored with the minutiae of an Arkansas land deal that went wrong. Now they fear that that public interest will be rekindled.

The records of Mrs Clinton's legal work for the Madison Guaranty bank, owned by James McDougal, the Clintons' partner on Whitewater, have undermined her credibility by showing she charged for more work than she remembered performing.

She said before a grand jury in January that she did not recall, but she may have seen the documents in 1992, when the first press inquiries into Whitewater were made.

"We said it was possible that Mrs Clinton handled the records during the 1992 campaign, so this report should not be surprising," said Mark Fabiani, the White House lawyer.

The fuss, which had Republican senators on Monday demanding the authority to extend their own hearings, has obscured one piece of good news for the White House. No fingerprints were found of Margaret Williams, the First Lady's chief of staff, who was accused by Senate investigators of removing the documents from the office of White House counsel Vince Foster on the night after his death.

Comeback Kid rides on, page 6

The Week

INDIA'S general election began on Sunday. Voters across the country have several election dates and the results will only be known by the middle of May.
Comment, page 12

THE auction of Jackie Kennedy Onassis's worldly goods in New York, which realised more than $30 million, set new records and justified hype as the sale of the century.
Washington Post, page 16

PROSECUTORS in Los Angeles have charged three men in connection with the murder of Haing Ngor, a survivor of the Khmer Rouge death camps who won an Oscar for his role in The Killing Fields.

A BOY of six was charged with attempted murder in California after allegedly pulling a four-week-old infant from his cradle and beating him almost to death.

EMERGENCY teams scrambled to stop a raging forest fire from reaching the Los Alamos nuclear research centre in New Mexico, where the world's first atomic bomb was built. The blaze has destroyed 4,500 hectares of forest.

CHERNOBYL nuclear power station suffered a minor release of radioactivity, just hours before the 10th anniversary of the world's worst nuclear accident there.

POLICE in Germany are hunting a kidnapping team who made away with more than $20 million in ransom before releasing Jan-Philipp Reemtsma, a multi-millionaire, after holding him in chains for five weeks.

INDONESIA has begun a week of official mourning and a period of political uncertainty after the death of Tien Suharto, the wife and confidante of President Suharto.

THE German chancellor, Helmut Kohl, has embarked on a severe austerity programme, one of the most ambitious campaigns of his political career, to prepare national finances for a strong single European currency.

BERNHARD GOETZ, who was ordered to pay $43 million to a young man he shot on a subway train in 1984, filed for bankruptcy to protect his chinchilla, his guinea pig and other possessions from being auctioned off.
Washington Post, page 16

HEAVY fighting broke out in the Liberian capital of Monrovia, jeopardising the truce.

PAMELA Lyndon Travers, who created Mary Poppins, a unique and unnerving children's nanny, has died, aged 96.

Yeltsin gets boost from China visit

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

WITH champagne toasts and bear-hug bonhomie, China and Russia last week declared a "strategic partnership" for the next century and, in a slap at the United States, vowed to resist the imposition of a new hegemony.

Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Jiang Zemin agreed in Beijing to set up a telephone hotline, increase military co-operation and boost mutual trade, currently worth only a ninth of that between China and the US.

"Sino-Russian friendly relations have entered a new era," said Mr Jiang. "China does not and will not pose any threat to Russia."

Both sides denied any desire to resurrect the doomed alliance forged by Mao Zedong and Stalin in 1950, but they declared a united front on major international issues, including defiance of Western accusations that they repress restive regions.

A joint communiqué filled with coded gibes at Washington said: "The world is far from tranquil. Hegemonism, power politics and repeated imposition of pressure on other countries continue to occur. Bloc politics has taken on new forms."

Until Mikhail Gorbachev visited China in 1989, Moscow was the principal target of Chinese charges of "hegemonism".

Mr Yeltsin offered unequivocal support for China's right to rule Taiwan and Tibet. Mr Jiang did the same for Russia's claim to Chechenia, and described the expansion of Nato towards Russia's border as "impermissible".

Concrete issues involving money rather than rhetoric proved more difficult. Neither side would say whether agreement had been reached on a gas pipeline from Siberia to the Yellow Sea, billed as the centrepiece of a new commercial partnership.

The mood of carefully orchestrated amity contrasted sharply with the bitterness surrounding previous trips by Kremlin leaders.

"I can't name a single question on which we would have different opinions," said President Yeltsin, who is using the trip to enhance his image as an international statesman before Russia's presidential elections in June.

So effusive was he that he announced agreement on one issue on which it was clear none existed. He told a press conference that China had promised to join the international ban on nuclear tests by the end of the year. China's foreign ministry quickly dissented, saying details had yet to be discussed.

● Mr Yeltsin was handed another big election gift from his Western backers on Monday, when agreement was reached between the Paris Club of creditor countries and Russia on rescheduling its debt.

Russia has agreed to pay $40 billion over 25 years in final settlement of the Soviet debt. It will pay back about $2 billion in 1996.

Doomsday cult trial grips Japan

Kevin Rafferty and AP in Tokyo

SHIZUE TAKAHASHI, whose husband, a deputy stationmaster, died in the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo underground last year, sobbed as the multiple murder trial of the founder of the Aum Shinrikyo doomsday cult began last week.

Chizuo Matsumoto, more commonly known as Shoko Asahara, is charged with masterminding the terrorist attack during the morning rush hour on March 20 last year in which 12 people died.

Mr Asahara is charged with 11 deaths and more than 3,700 injuries. For reasons to do with rules of evidence, the names of all 3,700 were read out in court.

Mrs Takahashi, whose husband inhaled a fatal dose of the gas as he tried to help passengers retching and convulsing on the platform of his underground station, felt enraged as Mr Asahara sat with his eyes closed and showed no emotion.

"My husband died a slow, painful death," she said, wiping tears from her eyes. "How could Asahara just sit there? He didn't even seem to care."

From the start, it was clear that Mr Asahara sees the court case as a test of wills. The four judges refused him permission to wear his robes, so he appeared in a navy blue tracksuit with his hair tied back in a ponytail. He stumbled into the courtroom as if to demonstrate his blindness and frailty. When asked to plead on the charges of murder, he told the judges: "I won't speak."

But Mr Asahara made a rambling statement about founding and leading the Aum cult. "I pity those who do not know the truth," he said. "I have no comment about things like lack of freedom and pain."

Some people in the court thought it sounded like a message to his followers, of whom about 120 remain in the headquarters in the shadow of Mount Fuji.

A total of 12,292 people queued to take part in a computer lottery for the 48 public seats in the court. All other court hearings were cancelled, and security was tight with more than 2,000 police on duty. A dozen media helicopters hovered above as Mr Asahara was brought to court in a bullet-proof coach flanked by police cars. If convicted, the cult leader could face death by hanging.

The underground gas attack destroyed Japan's self-confidence that it was the safest country in the world.

The names of the more than 3,700 victims took six hours to read. In the public gallery Michiko Hishinuma sobbed as the name of her husband, Tsuneo, was read out. He was a stationmaster who died trying to remove a parcel of gas from a train.

There are eight prosecutors and 12 defence lawyers. Mr Asahara's lawyers have asked to remain anonymous because they do not support Aum. The defence lawyers complained that the prosecutors had not disclosed enough evidence, and that public anger made it hard for Mr Asahara to get a fair trial.

There is no jury system in Japan and judges decide the case.

Ex-CIA chief missing

Martin Walker in Washington

WILLIAM COLBY, the director of the United States Central Intelligence Agency in its darkest hour of public humiliation, is missing and presumed drowned after his empty canoe was found at a dock on the Potomac river near Washington on Sunday.

Prolonged searches by police and coast guards failed to find any trace of the body. But no foul play was suspected in the disappearance of the 76-year-old spymaster, probably the most liberal figure to run the CIA.

Colby, a social democrat who recently campaigned for nuclear disarmament and for halving the Pentagon budget, began his intelligence career during the second world war. He was dropped behind enemy lines in France and Norway to lead guerrilla missions.

He will never be forgiven by many CIA veterans for his co-operation with the congressional inquiries launched into the agency after President Richard Nixon resigned over the Watergate scandal.

Nixon had tried and failed to get the CIA to join the cover-up on Watergate. A long internal inquiry was launched to ascertain when and where the CIA had ever broken the law. Known as the "family jewels", these covert assassination plots and operations within the US were made public by Colby under congressional interrogation.

He insisted he was trying to save the CIA by showing it to operate under the law and the authority of elected politicians. In the process, the CIA's code of secrecy was broken, along with its morale and the careers of many of its most senior figures.

The most prominent victim was Colby's patron and predecessor as director, Richard Helms, who was convicted of lying to Congress after he denied any CIA role in the 1973 coup in Chile.

Colby entitled his memoirs Honorable Men. But his running of the counter-terrorist Phoenix programme in Vietnam helped tarnish the CIA's reputation.

The programme attempted to counter the Viet Cong in rural areas with the same ruthless intimidation, bribery and assassination that the guerrillas were said to use. Estimates of the number of Viet Cong killed range from 20,000 to 60,000. Colby was widely denounced as a war criminal in anti-war demonstrations in the US.



Riding high . . . Aggrieved residents of Zurich's Münstergasse street fixed their bicycles to window frames last week after the landlord closed down a bicycle parking space PHOTOGRAPH: RENE MEIER

PLO vote paves way for talks

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

THE Palestine National Council (PNC), the Palestinians' parliament in exile, last week declared it no longer sought Israel's destruction.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation's revocation of the core of its founding covenant has opened the way for crucial talks with Israel to begin at the end of this week on the future of Palestine.

Negotiations on a so-called final status agreement, due to be implemented in 1999, will cover all the most contentious issues at the heart of the Middle East's most fractious dispute: refugees, Jewish settlements, final borders and the status of Jerusalem.

But, say critics of the changes in the PLO covenant, the Palestinians will go naked into the conference chamber, having in effect given up their claim, based on their natural majority, to control the destiny of the land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean.

The changes in the covenant were approved, at the insistence of President Yasser Arafat. Mr Arafat insists that the outcome of the next negotiations will be a Palestinian sovereign state, with Jerusalem as its capital. But he has also made it clear that the state he will accept will be a small, pale shadow of the Palestine envisaged by the PLO founding fathers.

Meeting for the first time since the 1967 Six Day War on Palestinian soil, the PNC session in Gaza City approved the changes by 504 votes to 54, with 14 abstentions.

The size of the majority astonished even Palestinian observers, who had predicted that Mr Arafat would struggle to achieve the two-thirds majority necessary for constitutional change.

In the end, most of the PNC bowed to presidential pressure. Radical elements, including the Popular and Democratic fronts, boycotted the session.

Dutch hard on immigrants

Stephen Bates in Nieuwersluis

THE Netherlands, long regarded as one of the most liberal countries in Europe, has adopted a regime for dealing with illegal immigrants so harsh that it has caused a wave of protests in detention centres.

Prison authorities have admitted that the policy is designed to discourage immigration to the Netherlands, one of the most crowded countries of western Europe, but accusations about the way the regime is being implemented have provoked anger and mutual recriminations from immigrants and prison staff.

Immigrants, held in detention, usually incommunicado, for up to nine months, have claimed they are regularly humiliated. Detainees say warders have forced them to pose for lewd naked photographs, that cells are overcrowded, and that they are denied access to lawyers and visitors, refused outside exercise and served still-frozen food or food forbidden on religious grounds.

The Netherlands is believed to be holding as many as 700 detainees, mostly from North Africa but also some from Bosnia. Deportation is often difficult if the illegal immigrant does not have papers and is not accepted by his native country.

Most have no money and are made to work at heavy manual labour of the sort given to convicted criminals at standard prison pay rates: 27 guilders ($17) for an 18-hour week.

A 29-year-old North African deported earlier this year after three months in detention said: "The authorities do their best to undermine your morale. One of my friends had photographs taken of him in the nude in such ways as they might appear in pornographic magazines. When he asked why they were doing this he was told it was for his dossier, but no file would need such photographs."

The man, who does not wish to be named, was arrested last November after he entered the Netherlands from France looking for work.

Several other EU states have adopted harsh measures to discourage immigrants, but Dutch observers admit the regime has problems.

Health plight of poor worsening

Chris Mihill

ONE sixth of the world's population — 800 million or so people — have no access to health care, and the medical plight of children in many countries is getting worse, a report from Save the Children warned last week.

The charity says health care systems in many of the poorest countries are collapsing, and a reduction in aid from rich countries is exacerbating the problem.

According to the report, the worst decline in health services in 50 years means that simple, preventable diseases will be killing more children by the end of the century.

Aid as a proportion of the income of donor countries is at it lowest level for 20 years, and resources are being diverted away from the poorest countries to areas like the Middle East and eastern Europe.

Save the Children says that while Western governments are concerned about corruption and inefficiency, they fail to understand how absolute the lack of resources is in many countries. The poorest countries are powerless to spend more on health even though they want to.

"There is a level of expenditure on health services below which nothing can be done. Save the Children believes that many of the world's poorest countries have reached that level."

The report says it costs at least $12 a person a year to provide basic health care. But 16 African countries spend less than this, as do Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Vietnam, and Pakistan. Britain spends $1,039 per head a year.

In Zaire the figure is just 40c. In Liberia and Tanzania it is 70c. Figures produced by Jane's Sentinel show that annual defence spending per head of population in Zaire is around $9.70, in Liberia $16.67 and Tanzania $105.

Save the Children says there is an argument that poor countries should spend less on defence and more on health, but goes on to point out that even if this was done, health spending would still fall below $12 a year because of lack of resources.

Natural disasters and war, huge debt repayments, and structural adjustment programmes — aimed at servicing Western debts — are crippling the ability of poor countries to invest in health.

The widening gap

Annual health and defence expenditure in Africa per head of population, dollars

Country	Defence	Health
Zaire	[illegible]	[illegible]
Liberia	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tanzania	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sierra Leone	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mozambique	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sudan	37.0	[illegible]
Uganda	[illegible]	[illegible]
Ethiopia	[illegible]	[illegible]
Madagascar	16.3	[illegible]
Bukina Faso	5.7	2.4
Ghana	[illegible]	6.6
Malawi	[illegible]	[illegible]

☐ Defence ■ Health

Source: Save the Children, Jane's Sentinel

Spanish right seals pact

Adela Gooch in Madrid

SPANISH conservatives and Catalan nationalists at the weekend cleared the final hurdle for the first full-blooded conservative government to take power in Madrid since the death of General Franco.

The centre-right Popular Party (PP) and the Catalan nationalist coalition Convergence and Union (CIU) ratified an agreement setting out the broad basis for a new government while granting Catalonia and other regions considerable concessions in return for CIU's backing of the PP in parliament.

The Catalans will not join a formal coalition but will vote in favour of the PP leader José María Aznar's investiture as prime minister together with Canary Islands nationalists, giving him the majority he failed to achieve in general elections last month. Basque nationalists, who are still negotiating, could also decide to support Mr Aznar in the vote, due in early May.

PP leaders sought to portray the pact, which has taken seven weeks of tough negotiation, as a triumph, outlining a new relationship between central and regional government — a constant source of conflict in Spanish history

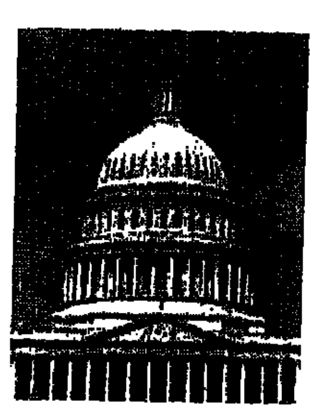
Mr Aznar's number two, Rodrigo Rato, who led the negotiations, said it was designed to last for a full four-year term "ensuring stability". Jordi Pujol, the Catalan regional president, was less exuberant. "We would like it to last four years . . . but we cannot guarantee it," he said.

However, the linchpin of the accord — an agreement to change the financing system for Spain's 17 regional administrations — drew immediate criticism from members of the outgoing Socialist administration who said the cost could hamper Spain's chances of meeting the Maastricht treaty criteria for monetary union.

The agreement reiterates the Popular Party's election pledge to meet convergence criteria, in particular the reduction of the budget deficit, while not eating into the welfare state.

The pact gives the regions a direct say in negotiations with the European Union and abolishes the civil governors, who are appointed by Madrid, while Catalonia itself receives specific concessions such as the right to manage its own ports and more direct control over policing, employment agencies and professional training.

Comeback Kid rides his luck



The US this week

Martin Walker

FOR MUCH of the first two years of the Clinton presidency, it was rare for anything to go right. Suddenly, it is rare for anything to go wrong. The success of the secretary of state, Warren Christopher, in crafting a ceasefire on the Lebanon border is another sign that little on the planet gets achieved unless the Americans take charge. And when they do take charge, the diplomats of the Clinton administration are proving extraordinarily effective — from Northern Ireland to Bosnia to the Middle East.

Doubtless there is much yet that can go awry, but the White House is in buoyant mood, and there is a new jubilance among Democrats in Congress. They now think they can repeat what their ancestors did to the Republican congressmen of 1952, who lost their majority in the House of Representatives after two brief years.

Bill Clinton dates his own political recovery to that moment fed to him by tragedy, when the nation came together in public grief for the victims of the Oklahoma City bombing one year ago. It is an unwritten part of the presidential job to act, on occasions of great national sentiment, as medicine man and monarch and minister to the hapless flock. Ronald Reagan sealed his own grip on the presidency as mourner-in-chief after disaster befell the Challenger space shuttle. Clinton became presidential, perhaps for the first time, when he fulfilled his sacerdotal duty in Oklahoma.

That is the mystic explanation for the latest feat of the Comeback Kid. Clinton has another, so rational that it carries a deliberate echo of Einstein's great formula. The president calls it "E-squared M-squared", and doodles it on his notepads. It stands for the issues on which he chose to make his stand and fight against the Republican majority in Congress. Environment and education are the two Es; Medicare and Medicaid the two Ms.

Last week Clinton won the tactical battle, as the Republicans gave up on their seven-month campaign to achieve a political revolution by their refusal to vote this year's budget. The tactic backfired, as the public blamed the Republicans for closing down the business of government. In return for modest spending cuts, Clinton saved each of his main priorities: his election pledge to put 100,000 extra police on the streets; his Goals 2000 education reform; his national service scheme; his extended college loan and scholarship plan and a series of environmental measures.

Clinton also won Republican agreement to repeal a measure they had passed earlier, to require all members of the armed forces diagnosed with the HIV virus to be automatically discharged with the loss of pension rights and medical benefits. Condemning the measure as "cruel and vindictive", Mr Clinton had sworn to overturn it, and regained much lost ground among his disillusioned gay supporters by his stand.

In return, the Republicans got little more than the right to boast that they had cut planned spending by $43 billion. In fact, it was nearer $23 billion. Speaker Newt Gingrich claimed, although without his usual conviction, that this was "a great achievement — we have changed the spending culture in Washington, the most significant shift since World War Two".

The other concession to the Republicans will be paid for mainly by the Third World, a commitment that US aid will be barred from any population control programme elsewhere in the world that includes or authorises abortion. Finally settled more than halfway through the government's fiscal year, the 1996 budget ends the series of stopgap temporary funding measures that have kept the business of American government lurching unreliably along since last October.

The months of tactical jostling over the budget have tended to obscure Clinton's real success, the strategic victory in slowing, stopping and finally derailing the Republican revolution. In his relaxed moments, George Stephanopoulos has been known to liken it to the Wehrmacht's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, claiming that after dreadful defeats, Clinton had fought and won his battle of Stalingrad, "and we are now advancing back across the plains of Byelorussia". In retrospect, looking back to that heady moment when Gingrich became the first Republican Speaker to rule Congress for 40 years, there has been an epic political struggle, and Clinton has won it.

Gingrich's once-famous "Contract with America" is forgotten, and only half-fulfilled. Republicans used to boast of a grand realignment of US politics; they are now fighting desperately to cling on to their majority in the House. The jubilant Democrats think they have a strong chance of winning it back.

The latest Lou Harris poll suggests that they are right. It shows Senator Robert Dole with a 36 per cent positive, and 59 per cent negative rating. Gingrich has a positive-negative ratio of 30-66. And for the Republicans in Congress as a whole, the ratio is 31-67.

The last time any American politician had a 66 per cent negative rating was Richard Nixon, in the month of his resignation. The lowest that Clinton ever dropped was 63 per cent negative in June of his first year, with the $200 haircut, and 61 per cent in December, 1994, just after the Republican election triumph.

Hillary Clinton's own explanation for the revival of her husband's fortunes starts from the conviction that there was never much of a revolution in the first place. The 1994 congressional elections were a close-run thing. With 20,000 more votes, spread strategically across a dozen constituencies, the Democrats would have kept control of the House of Representatives.



The Hillary theory, which is shared by Harold Ickes, the deputy White House chief of staff who is the real campaign manager, says that the Democrats were defeated in 1994 because core supporters stayed away. The First Lady has a point. The black vote was down by about 15 per cent, the unions were still furious over Clinton's free trade policies, and gays stayed away from the polls in disgust as his feebleness on their issue.

BUT ALMOST all the sniping on the left has ended, in tribute to Clinton's successful rearguard battles against the Republicans in Congress. Unlike his Democratic predecessors Jimmy Carter and Lyndon Johnson, Clinton faced no challenger from his own party in this year's primaries. And you have to go back to Grover Cleveland in the 1880s to identify an incumbent president who failed to win re-election after escaping a challenge in the primaries.

Even though Senator Robert Dole has now secured the Republican nomination, his campaign appearances have been lacklustre, and despite his holiday, he looks tired. A caustic new bumper-sticker from the Democrats sums up his plight; it says "Dole IS 96". The wounds within his party are still leaking blood. The moderates are threatening to join with the Democrats to raise the minimum wage. Pat Buchanan has not given up his quixotic campaign, and has whipped up the religious right to demand implacable anti-gay and anti-abortion pledges in the Republican election manifesto.

Gingrich complains that his party is "in a funk". Republican heavyweights admit that this year's election already looks to be all over. "Bob Dole is likely to lose the presidential race — he may lose badly," argued William Kristol, former chief of staff to vice-president Dan Quayle, in an essay last week which said the priority now was to save the conservative cause from the Dole defeat.

So if this were a boxing match, the ref would have stopped it by now. If it were a bullfight, the crowd would already have awarded Dole's ears and tail to Clinton. The scale of Clinton's current opinion poll lead over his elderly Republican challenger stuns all observers. It dwarfs all recent precedent and stretches the imagination.

Stan Greenberg, the Yale academic who was Clinton's personal pollster in 1992, chuckled nervously the other day as he confided that his latest polls were showing Clinton with a 30-point lead among voters over the age of 65. "It's off the map, it's off the wall. This is not just landslides, it is the stuff of earthquakes."

Ron Lester, the pollster who specialises in black voters, says that Clinton's approval rating among blacks in April is higher than that of Lyndon Johnson when he passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the touchstone of the civil rights revolution.

Recall the mid-term elections of 18 months ago, when the Republicans rode the tide of white male anger to regain control of both Houses of Congress for the first time in 40 years. In 1994, nearly two-thirds of white males, 63 per cent, voted Republican. The gender gap is now reversed. Among women, the latest CNN poll has Clinton leading Dole by a margin of 64-36. He even leads Dole by three points among men.

There are six months to go before the elections, and any one of four things could go hideously wrong. Whitewater seems to be draining harmlessly away, but some skeleton could yet tumble from an Arkansan cupboard. Russia could vote communist. China or the Middle East might erupt into war, and Wall Street could take a corrective plunge from the current dizzy highs.

Yet no sitting president who has enjoyed this kind of lead in the springtime of election year has ever been defeated. By all precedent, it looks as though Clinton is set to repeat the kind of landslide that Reagan enjoyed in 1984, which Richard Nixon enjoyed in 1972 and which Lyndon Johnson enjoyed in 1964.

And yet Clinton is not particularly popular. The Harris polls give him a positive rating of 52 per cent, and a negative of 47. In the April of 1964 and 1984, both Johnson and Reagan enjoyed very high positive ratings of more than 60 points.

Clinton's current situation echoes, to an uncanny degree, that of his analogue 24 years ago — Richard Nixon, whose positive-negative rating was 50-46. Perhaps there has always been some special chord that linked Tricky Dicky and Slick Willie, back to the days in 1974 when Hillary Rodham served on the congressional staff that prepared the formal indictment of Nixon, before moving down to Arkansas to marry Clinton.

Like Clinton, Nixon had plumbed the depths of public unpopularity, with the invasion of Cambodia and the wage and price freezes. Like Clinton, Nixon, too, had come back from the political dead. Nixon was the Comeback Kid of his day.

Across the generations, Nixon and Clinton are the devious twins, the mirror image of one another. Clinton has proved to be the first of the conservative Democrats, proud to proclaim that "the era of big government is over". He stamped firmly on the old Democratic tradition of trying to understand the criminal. His enthusiasm for "three strikes and you're out", mandatory lifetime imprisonment for those convicted of a third felony, will increase an already overcrowded system.

By contrast, Nixon was the last liberal, the last president to declare "We are all Keynesians now". He was the last president before Clinton to send up to Congress a scheme for national health insurance reform, and another for a welfare system that would guarantee all families a minimum income. Nixon, with some reluctance, proved to be the father of the public broadcasting networks, and of the modern system of affirmative action to help blacks and other minorities win access to jobs and education.

The triumph of the free market ideologists under Reagan was so complete that we tend to forget just how different Republicans used to be. Faced with a balance of payments crisis in August 1971, Nixon responded with the most sweeping state controls over the economy any president has dared impose in peacetime. He froze prices and wages, blocked imports and imposed special surcharges.

Nixon was the last lawyer to be elected to the presidency before Clinton, and the two men have the ugly distinction of being voted into power despite two of the nastier nicknames of recent public life. Tricky Dicky and Slick Willie sound as if they could hail from the same used car lot. They certainly seem to evoke what we might delicately call the same balanced response among the voters at this stage in their re-election year. Nixon, of course, went on to a landslide against a weak opponent, and then to humiliation as scandal finally overtook him. Historical parallels, one trusts, have their limits

Hugo Young, page 12

Strike over SA's constitution

Rex Merrifield
in Johannesburg

MEMBERS of South Africa's largest labour federation went on strike across the country on Tuesday to force politicians to give in to their demands over the post-apartheid constitution.

Workers in the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) downed tools for a day despite attempts by their ally, President Nelson Mandela's ruling African National Congress (ANC), to broker a settlement over the dispute.

Cosatu, with 1.6 million members, wants to stop the right of employers to lock out workers in a dispute being enshrined in the constitution that is set for adoption next week if parties iron out 11th-hour differences.

The first big national strike since all-race elections ushered in democracy in 1994 is not over pay or conditions.

A four-hour meeting with the ANC secretary general, Cyril Ramaphosa, on Monday failed to reassure Cosatu, which was one of the party's main allies in the fight against apartheid.

Investors have cited concern about the strike among reasons for the South African rand's plunge last week. On Tuesday the rand traded slightly weaker at 4.38 to the dollar.

Cranes on the Johannesburg skyline were idle and trains, though mostly running, were empty in some areas.

The National Union of Mineworkers, a Cosatu affiliate with roughly 350,000 members, has backed the strike, causing anxiety in overseas bullion markets over possible lost production. But South African mining companies reported most employees had arrived for the early Tuesday shift.

Cosatu is also fighting against inclusion of specific clauses in the consortium on the protection of property rights, on education and on the status of South Africa's 11 official languages. — *Reuter*

Fires rage across Mongolia

FIRES raging across Mongolia's vast grasslands and forests have killed 15 people and injured 60, a Mongolian official in charge of fire-fighting said on Tuesday.

"The fires are raging mostly in the central and eastern regions," General Dandisuren, head of the Emergency Commission, said in the Mongolian capital, Ulan Bator.

About 280,000 hectares were on fire, but high winds on grass dry from drought continued to push the fires, said Gen Dandisuren. More dry weather and strong winds are expected until mid-May, he said.

The president, Punsalmaagiyn Ochirbat, and the prime minister, Puntsagiyn Jasray, called on the whole country to fight the fires.

Seventy-two fires have spread to 13 of Mongolia's 21 provinces, killing 5,000 head of livestock, according to Bayala, secretary-general of the Emergency Commission.

About 500 people were left homeless, and 180 *yurts*, the felt tents that are home to many Mongolians, were destroyed, the commission said. Monglia's improverished herdsmen depend on their animals and the pastures of the country's grasslands for their livelihood.

Bayala said more than 24,000 people were fighting the fires, and the government had spent $800,000 on relief. The country has appealed for international aid. — *AP*

Le Monde, page 13

Coup threat by Paraguay army recedes

Reuter in Asuncion

THE coup threat in Paraguay appeared over last week after President Juan Carlos Wasmosy, heeding public anger, decided not to make the army rebel general, Lino Oviedo, defence minister.

General Oviedo, who plunged Paraguay into its worst crisis since the 36-year dictatorship of General Alfredo Stroessner was toppled in 1989, said he would "gladly" defend himself in court against insurrection charges and pledged his life to party politics.

"Gen Oviedo never was, is not and never will be insurrectionist," he told supporters.

The flamboyant general's refusal to accept his dismissal by the president on Monday last week triggered a standoff that threatened Paraguay's fledgling democracy. Mr Wasmosy had accused Gen Oviedo of insubordination.

But the president later announced that the general would hand over command, retire and become defence minister. In a ceremony at First Corps Army barracks, Gen Oviedo gave up his command.

Ignoring protesters who said rewarding Gen Oviedo made a "mockery" of democracy, the president said: "We have managed to keep the nation's armed forces subordinated to legitimate civilian power."

Later, however, the president had a change of heart and withdrew his offer to the general.

Coup rumours swept Asuncion when it emerged there was no presidential decree making Gen Oviedo minister. Hundreds of his followers poured past police barricades into Government House expecting to witness his swearing-in.

But they were taunted by thousands of elated anti-Oviedo protesters when Mr Wasmosy withdrew the offer.

"The people's will takes precedence over any commitment I may have undertaken," the president said, referring to the popular outrage at his earlier offer. "That is why I have resolved to sacrifice my commitment, with all the consequences that this may have, and . . . not designate Gen Oviedo defence minister."

The Week in Britain James Lewis

Continental drift leaves Major facing more unrest

BY THIS weekend, Tory critics of the Prime Minister, John Major, will have another stick to beat him with. The party seemed set for a heavy defeat in Thursday's local government elections — Labour was looking to gain 500 of the 1,661 seats defended by the Tories and Liberal Democrats — which would strengthen right-wingers' demands for a change of direction, if not of leadership.

Political swings in local council elections do not, of course, say much about what would happen at a general election. But the loss of seats, or any of the mere dozen town halls which they currently control, would be a further blow to the Tories' already jittery morale.

The extent of the jitters was revealed last week when the maverick billionaire financier, Sir James Goldsmith, began to promote his single-issue Referendum Party. With more than £20 million to spend on his campaign, Sir James is threatening to contest every parliamentary constituency at the next general election demanding a referendum on European issues, notably the question, "Who governs Britain?"

No one seriously thinks that the Referendum Party could capture more than 2 per cent of the vote, and probably less, though even this could be enough to jeopardise some Conservative MPs in marginal seats. John Redwood, last year's unsuccessful Tory leadership challenger, went to meet Sir James to warn him that he was in danger of splitting the Eurosceptic vote and, worse, letting in a federalist Labour government. It was all to no avail, though the two men were said to have found they "shared a broad measure of agreement about the kind of Europe they want to see".

The Conservatives generally seemed uncertain whether to take the Goldsmith challenge seriously, or dismiss it as a harmless irrelevance. The former Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, was an exception. He abandoned his normally urbane style to launch a savage counter-attack, declaring that the nationalistic and protectionist politics favoured by Mr Goldsmith were of the kind that had led to the second world war.

As many as 60 Eurosceptic Tory MPs were said to be prepared to widen the party split by coordinating their election addresses to include calls to reject a single European currency and, possibly, commit themselves to a referendum on any move towards greater European integration.

And all this comes after Mr Major thought he had silenced the Eurosceptics when he fought off Mr Redwood's challenge last year.

ANXIETIES about Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD), and its possible links with "mad cow disease" (BSE), were heightened with reports of new and younger victims, and fears about a suspected new strain of the disease, which initially presents with different symptoms.

Scientists at the CJD monitoring unit in Edinburgh, believe that three people, and possibly as many as nine, may have fallen victim to the new strain since January. They include women aged between 20 and 30, and one girl as young as 15.

A definite diagnosis of CJD, however, can only be made through a post-mortem examination and, in the case of the 15-year-old, doubts were raised about the accuracy of the American-developed test used in her diagnosis.

Europe keeps ban, page 9

JONATHAN JONES, a 36-year-old market researcher who had spent 17 months of a life sentence in prison for the alleged murder of his girlfriend's parents, was released when his sentence was quashed on appeal. It was "a victory for love and truth", said Cheryl Tooze, who had led a campaign against his conviction and offered a £25,000 reward for information leading to the conviction of her parents' real killer.

The prosecution claimed that Mr Jones shot Harry and Megan Tooze in their South Wales farmhouse because he would inherit up to £150,000 if he were to marry Cheryl, his partner of 15 years. But the only forensic evidence against him was a thumb-print on a saucer. The case became a *cause célèbre* as Miss Tooze's campaigning resulted in TV documentaries and a counter-campaign by villagers to keep Mr Jones behind bars. South Wales police say they will not reopen the investigation, but the reward still stands.

A NUMBER of Tory MPs, including the former prime minister, Sir Edward Heath, are to withhold details of some or all of their earnings from outside consultancy work. But this may not be in defiance of new rules passed by Parliament last year in response to the Nolan Committee's report on sleaze in public life. The rules still leave some "grey areas", because contracts and fees only have to be disclosed if they relate to MPs' parliamentary activities.

The new Register of MPs' Interests — the first to be published since the new rules were drawn up — is likely to show that a number of MPs have given up consultancies rather than have their fees subject to scrutiny. Others, like the former Tory minister, David Mellor (and probably Sir Edward) are thought to have argued successfully that their outside contracts and fees do not derive from their parliamentary status and activities.





Willie Anderson on his Scottish farm, which was contaminated by Chernobyl fallout PHOTO: MURDO MacLEOD

Legacy of night when it rained radiation

SADIE ANDERSON already had a good reason to remember that spring evening in 1986. "It was a really wet night — so wet I got lost on the road," she recalls, *writes Erlend Clouston*.

Ten years later, Sadie and her husband, Willie, are still shaking off the effects of the downpour. The rain that sluiced over their remote Upper Wellwood farm at Muirkirk, in the bleak Lowther Hills of south-east Scotland, was bearing radioactive contamination from the explosion a week earlier at the Soviet Union's Chernobyl nuclear plant. The seasoning of caesium that their 5,500 acres received on the night of May 3 was so intense that Upper Wellwood remains one of the 36 Scottish farms still policed by Geiger-counter wielding Scottish Office inspectors.

At the height of the crisis, 1.5 million sheep divided among 2,900 holdings stretching from Galloway to Ross and Cromarty could not be moved without government approval. With caesium having a half-life of 30 years, no one is predicting when the quasi-quarantine will end.

This August, like all the previous Augusts since 1986, Mr Anderson will notify the Department of Agriculture at Ayr that he is intending to bring lambs to Lanark market. The inspectors will apply their Geiger counters. Every animal that registers over 1,000 becquerels per kilo is colour-coded on its neck to indicate the month of testing. Once sold on for fattening on lowland grass, the lambs usually shed their radioactivity within two months.

Bomb dampens peace hopes

David Sharrock

THE IRA last week stepped up its bombing campaign in England with a device containing the largest amount of high explosive yet used in a mainland bomb.

The bomb placed under Hammersmith Bridge in west London on Wednesday last week would have caused enormous damage and disruption but failed to detonate properly. No one was injured in the explosion.

The quantity of explosives indicates that the IRA is still seeking a "spectacular" before the elections in Northern Ireland on May 30. Previously it had appeared that it merely wanted to cause minor disruption to show that it was active, without derailing the peace process.

The device planted under the south side of the bridge contained 30lb (14kg) of high explosive, understood to be Semtex, which was to have been detonated by two blasts.

The double failure is taken to indicate that the IRA's bomb-making operation on the mainland is impaired. There is no evidence, as has been suggested in the past, that the operation was sabotaged deliberately.

Sinn Fein meanwhile announced that it would contest the Ulster forum elections, but any hopes that the IRA will call a new ceasefire receded when the leading republican, Martin McGuinness, said there was no point in attempting to seek one against the background of British bad faith.

In comments that will embarrass other nationalist leaders, Mr McGuinness said the 17-month IRA ceasefire had not been permanent and that anybody connected with the peace process had never been under any illusions. He spoke after the nationalist SDLP put further distance between itself and Sinn Fein by announcing that not only will it take part in the May 30 elections but will also take its seats in the forum, running in tandem with the all-party talks on the province's future.

Unionists later reacted with fury when the Government admitted that the former Northern Ireland minister Michael Mates has met senior republicans, including the convicted IRA bomber Gerry Kelly, since the bombing of Canary Wharf.

Mr Mates held two meetings at the prompting of Sinn Fein, and is likely to have a third. It appears that pro-Unionist officials in the Northern Ireland Office revealed the contacts in an attempt to embarrass the Government.

Many backbench Tories want the Government to drop its neutral attitude towards the future constitutional status of Northern Ireland, and instead act as a persuader for the Union, according to a poll by BBC's On The Record. Fifty-three of the 101 backbenchers polled believed the Government should act as a persuader for the Union.

Hi-tech saves Everest climber

Vivek Chaudhary

A CLIMBER who suffered a heart attack on the slopes of Mount Everest was saved after a rescue operation involving his friend's wife in Hong Kong, a solar-powered mobile phone, a fax machine and the Internet.

Eamon Fullen, a 28-year-old naval diver, collapsed on the world's highest peak as temperatures began falling with only two hours daylight left. Mr Fullen's climbing partner, Mike Trueman, called his wife, Helen, in Hong Kong using the phone, after failing to get a land line to nearby Kathmandu. He told her: "Get help quick."

Mrs Trueman, a community paediatrician with the British forces in Hong Kong, contacted the headquarters of the Gurkhas, who then telephoned the Nepalese army and asked it to scramble a helicopter to rescue Mr Fullen.

The army, however, had only a small helicopter available which could hover at high altitude for only 15 minutes with room for a patient and oxygen cylinder. Using the Internet, phone and fax, Mrs Trueman acted as mediator between the helicopter base, camp and hospital.

After being treated by two doctors in the climbing party and surviving temperatures of -15C, Mr Fullen was flown to a Kathmandu hospital. He is now out of intensive care.

Mr Trueman, a former Gurkha, said after the rescue: "It was a remarkable and well co-ordinated international rescue mission."

Accompanied by nine other climbers and six Sherpas, Mr Trueman is continuing his expedition to reach the summit of Everest.

EU keeps beef ban despite cull plan

Guardian Reporters

EUROPEAN agriculture ministers emerged from long talks in Brussels on Monday seemingly prepared to offer Douglas Hogg, the UK agriculture minister, the bare minimum to allow him to claim progress on lifting the trade ban on British beef — though he appeared unlikely to be able to confirm that bans on even such marginal beef products as tallow and gelatin will be ended.

Instead, the EU member states' veterinary officers are to be called in to discuss the British proposals for eradicating BSE — "mad cow disease" — while ministers discuss further compensation measures. If any parts of the ban are to be overturned they will have to wait for a meeting of veterinary officials in Brussels next week.

There appeared to be general acceptance that lifting the ban must be based on scientific evidence and that Britain was taking steps in the right direction — though still not far enough. The ban was imposed in March after BSE was linked with a human form of the disease.

At the same time John Major pressed the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl, at talks in Downing Street on Monday, to back a lifting of the ban. Mr Kohl does not wish to stoke the anti-German feeling in the Conservative party, but German consumer opinion makes it difficult for him to pronounce British beef safe.

Ministers last week announced they had finally submitted to the EU proposals to deal with the crisis, suggesting the selective slaughter of about 40,000 cattle from herds where traces of BSE have been found.

The European Commission and other member states reject selective slaughter being conditional on their easing the ban. Other member states are expected to press for more widespread slaughter.

Mr Hogg proposes that cattle born at the same time as animals with BSE symptoms be taken out of the food chain. The Government estimates that there are about 42,000 such animals and their elimination would reduce the number of BSE cases by 15-30 per cent.

Evidence that Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, was considering retaliation if the ban is not lifted came in a leaked letter from Mr Rifkind to cabinet colleagues, which called on them to look at ways their departments could disrupt the EU without breaking the law.

Meanwhile farmers cleared the first hurdle in their legal battle to challenge the worldwide ban on beef. The National Farmers' Union won leave to seek a judicial review in the High Court of the EU decision to ban beef exports from Britain. Mr Justice Turner said the NFU had an "arguable case" that the EU ban was illegal and ordered the case to be referred to the European Court "at the earliest expedient moment".

The European Court is the only forum that can rule on the validity of the ban, and if it found for the farmers they would be able to claim millions of pounds in compensation from the Commission.

Stuart Issacs QC, for the NFU, said the effect of the ban had been catastrophic. In 1995 Britain had exported beef and beef products worth $785 million worldwide. That trade had ceased completely, putting at risk the livelihoods of more than 25,000 agricultural workers, 62,000 in meat processing, 7,500 in the cattle auction business and 8,500 in the haulage industry.

MPs threaten to ruin divorce bill

Patrick Wintour and Rebecca Smithers

JOHN MAJOR suffered a bruising defeat in the Commons last week when four of his cabinet colleagues voted against the Government's divorce reforms and helped push through the amendment extending the proposed "waiting period" for divorce from one year to 18 months.

They were enough to lose Mr Major the vote, with MPs voting 200 to 196 against the Government's preferred one-year option.

The Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay, ruled out shelving the bill, despite backbench calls, led by John Patten, to recognise belatedly that the bill remained anti-family and hugely unpopular with the party.

An unholy alliance of Labour and Conservative rightwingers, led by Edward Leigh, are set to mangle the bill still further in committee. Labour warned that unless the Government agrees to inject a new emphasis on marriage reconciliation and the needs of children, it may vote against the bill's third reading in June.

In the Commons, Mr Major accused the Labour leader, Tony Blair, of a willingness to shelve his Christian conscience for party political advantage. He said Mr Blair was being deliberately misleading in interpreting the free vote as a humiliation for his government.

Mr Major said his entire party, including ministers, had been given a genuinely free vote, claiming Mr Blair and his henchmen did not understand the concept.

In the Commons Mr Blair, intent on fostering the impression of a government in advanced stages of disintegration, told Mr Major the bill had been about the Government's entire ethos, asserting the vote showed "the humiliating state to which your authority has been reduced".



Lord Mackay: under pressure to shelve his controversial bill

But Mr Major pointed out that at the time of the Queen's Speech last November, he had promised to give a free vote on the two key personal conscience issues in the bill, that of removing the concept of fault from divorce and the length of cooling off periods before divorce.

He then played on Mr Blair's Christianity for the first time. "The next time you talk to us about your conscience, and matters relating to church and conscience, perhaps you will indicate that it doesn't apply when you see political advantage."

Labour sources insisted the vote was a legitimate target since the Cabinet had initially only granted the free vote on the two central planks of the bill because of Tory divisions over family policy.

Among the rebels, which also included a scrum of junior government members, was Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, one of the Prime Minister's most trusted allies.

Close friends of Mr Major were described as "stunned" that so many cabinet ministers — they also included the Health Secretary Stephen Dorrell, the Welsh Secretary William Hague and the Social Security Secretary Peter Lilley — backed the amendment, undermining the Prime Minister's attempts to hold his party together after the recent byelection defeat and ahead of the local government elections.

The scale of Tory opposition to the reforms, demonstrated in a series of unwhipped free votes on two main issues, showed the Conservative party is clearly divided over the troubled Family Law Bill, which the rebels fear will undermine the institution of marriage and push up spiralling divorce rates.

MPs voted to extend the period earmarked for "reflection" before a divorce is granted. Their victory sparked calls for the Government to consider abandoning the legislation.

The amendment, tabled by Mr Leigh, still allows for a one-year waiting period in three cases, however: where couples consent to divorce and have no children; where there is proof of domestic violence; or where a longer period is considered to be "significantly detrimental to the welfare of any child".

'High suicide risk' for Asian women

Martin Wainwright

A STUDY revealing that suicide rates among Asian-origin women in Britain are twice the national average is expected to focus government and charitable aid on self-help support groups within the communities involved.

Data compiled by a senior epidemiologist at Surrey university suggests that a complex mixture of cultural traditions, family relationships, and the stress of high achievement have put the women in the same high-risk suicide category as doctors and farmers.

The report is by Dr Veena Soni Raleigh, who has written a series of analyses of suicide among Asian women in Britain, South Africa, and the West Indies. Although the figure confirms previous data recording a particularly high incidence among Hindu women, it also reveals an apparent increase among young Muslim women, whose religion is strongly opposed to suicide.

The study and two previous reports are being examined by the Department of Health, which, with its Health of the Nation strategy for the millennium, has made combating suicide a priority. Health professionals are particularly anxious to tackle high-risk groups, but there is concern about misunderstandings and raising emotions in local communities through clumsy outside interference.

"It is a subject which needs very thorough and careful attention, avoiding the sort of stereotypes which people tend to latch on to — of Asian women locked away in a bedroom or whatever," said Dr Raleigh. "That does go on, but there are also many articulate, Westernised, and high-achieving women from the Asian communities. That can bring its own form of pressure, especially within families."

Dr Raleigh's data, spanning 25 years, coincides with comments from a Bradford coroner, James Turnbull, that stress on Asian women in the city leads to a small annual number of "encouraged suicides", following pressure from families.

Mr Turnbull cites cultural emphasis on providing a male heir as a particularly strong pressure in such cases.

House of Lords leads revolt on asylum bill

Alan Travis

A HOUSE of Lords rebellion led by the unlikely figures of the Duke of Norfolk and the Bishop of Liverpool last week put a hole in legislation by the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, seeking to curb the rights of asylum seekers.

The peers voted by 143 to 124 to exempt torture victims and those who have fled from countries with a recent record of torture from the bill's "white list" provisions and the new "fast-track procedure" for dealing with asylum applicants.

Home Office ministers claimed that the new provision would be widely exploited by the unscrupulous to undermine the effect of the bill in dealing with bogus asylum claims.

Among the five Conservative peers who rebelled were the Duke of Norfolk, Britain's premier Roman Catholic peer, and Lord Boyd Carpenter, the father-in-law of Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister. They were joined by four bishops, 33 cross-benchers and Labour and Liberal Democrat peers.

The Government may face a stiff task in overturning the defeat when the bill returns to the Commons as it only narrowly survived an earlier vote.

The Bishop of Liverpool, the Rt Rev David Sheppard, moving the successful amendment, said that torture victims were the most vulnerable people in the world and most of those who applied for asylum came from India, Pakistan, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Somalia and other countries which had historical ties of empire to Britain.

Asylum claims from the seven designated "white list" countries would be presumed to be unfounded and put through a procedure which would give claimants only 10 days to produce the necessary documents. Dr Sheppard said that was too soon to be able to produce medical evidence and was an inappropriate procedure for torture victims. "They should be removed from the scope of this clause," he said.

The white list countries so far designated are India, Pakistan, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ghana, Poland and Romania.

The sharp rise in applications for asylum in Britain appears to have gone into reverse in the first three months of 1996, according to initial unpublished Home Office figures.

Disclosure of the figures comes as ministers face the prospect of a fresh rebellion in the Lords over the Asylum and Immigration Bill. The Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, which worked to secure the Government defeat last week, is hopeful that peers will also act to protect the rights of unaccompanied refugee children.

The new figures show a harsher climate inside the Home Office. The refusal rate for asylum applications so far this year has risen from 70 per cent to 81 per cent.



HANDRIN, above, has visited London's Tower Bridge twice in his life. A family photo records the first trip in early February, the Kurdish asylum seeker smiling and waving at the camera with the bridge in the background, *writes Stuart Millar*.

The photograph inspired the second visit last month, when Handrin tried to kill himself by jumping off it.

He woke up in the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, east London, with a fractured spinal disc and injuries to his kidneys. Despite his best efforts to force his body under the water, the river police had fished him out. His first thought after regaining consciousness was: "Please don't let the suffering start again."

Before jumping off the bridge, Handrin, aged 39, had spent almost six weeks sleeping rough around north and east London. Penniless, hungry and increasingly desperate, he decided to take his own life.

"I didn't want to suffer any more. I thought if I died it would release all the suffering," he explained through an interpreter.

Handrin — who asked for his real name not be used — is one of an estimated 3,700 asylum seekers who have fallen foul of Home Office regulations preventing them from claiming benefits if they do not make their application immediately on entering the United Kingdom.

Unable to claim income support and barred from finding a job, he had been forced to leave his sister's home when the little money he had brought with him ran out.

Handrin's legal aid lawyer has begun building a test case against the Home Office's ruling that he is not allowed to work while his asylum application is considered. The lawyer is seeking counsel's opinion with a view to bringing a judicial review of the ruling this week. If successful, it will be the first case of its kind to go before the courts.

PHOTOGRAPH: PIPPA MATTHEWS

UK export fears raised by Saudis

Roger Cowe

BRITISH businesses are preparing for further fall-out from the diplomatic row with Saudi Arabia after a warning last week from the interior minister, Prince Nayef, that his government can turn to friendly countries rather than buying British.

An impending $900 million order for Challenger tanks, to be built by Vickers, is considered vulnerable to the squabble over the Saudi dissident, Mohammed al-Mas'ari, whose deportation from Britain was blocked by the Court of Appeal.

Prince Nayef said Saudi Arabia did not attempt to impose its views on any country, but was free to shop elsewhere if Britain proved unfriendly.

"We can distinguish a friend from an enemy and recognise who wants to keep his interests with us and who does not care about these interests. And we can find what we need anywhere in the world," Prince Nayef told a London-based Saudi newspaper.

His comments raised fears for Britain's $2.4 billion exports to Saudi Arabia. The Department of Trade and Industry has insisted there is no discrimination against British suppliers, but business sources say contracts have virtually dried up.

Last week, Babcock, the engineering construction group, said it had abandoned attempts to win business in Saudi Arabia after it had become clear that contracts were not going to be awarded. A source said: "No matter what the DTI or the Saudis say, there is a *de facto* ban on UK contractors."

In the past, British businesses benefited from political influence on decisions, often being preferred for defence contracts to US manufacturers who were implicated in supplying Israel. But British defence sources said Vickers's hopes of winning a contract for 150 Challenger tanks could be dashed.

The Government had tried to soothe Saudi fears about opposition activity in Britain by attempting to deport Mr Mas'ari, who fled to Britain last year, but his move to the Caribbean island of Dominica was blocked by the appeal court. Last week the Government announced that Mr Mas'ari could stay for four years.

Matters were not improved by a BBC programme on human rights in Saudi Arabia, broadcast in the Middle East, which featured an interview with Mr Mas'ari. The BBC's contract to transmit its Arabic service to the country was promptly cancelled.

Welsh dragon undercuts Eastern tigers

FRESH low-wage competition for skilled jobs is coming from the latest and least likely recruit to the ranks of the tiger economies: South Wales, *writes Dan Atkinson*. The one-time heartland of heavy industry and labour militancy is undercutting the Far East, bringing back jobs long lost to the developing world.

The latest to come home is Ronson's highly successful petrol lighter, the Typhoon, heading for Cwmbran in Gwent after many years on the Pacific Rim.

With Korean wage rates pressing upwards as the country follows the trail blazed by the Japanese, Ronson's chief executive Howard Hodgeson has decided to bring the tools and the work back to Britain.

He disclosed that Korean pay averages £10,000- £12,000 a year, against £8,000- £10,000 in South Wales, while insisting the move back to Wales was not entirely based on relative wage costs. Manufacturing in Wales will eliminate shipping costs, he said, and allow Ronson to stick a Union Jack — whose kudos is "considerable" — on the lighter.

"The British worker is not the worker that I grew up with in the 1960s, with his tea breaks and his strikes," he said. "Today's employee is a quality worker."

Mr Hodgeson is convinced that South Korea is mimicking Japan, transforming itself from a base for low-wage manufacture of cheap and cheerful goods to a world-class economic player. In the process, incomes rise.

● General Electric, the US aerospace giant, gave a £27 million vote of confidence in its base near Caerphilly. The investment will safeguard more than 1,000 jobs at the South Wales plant.

Land-mines ban a 'sham'

Peter Beaumont

BRITAIN is to press ahead with plans to procure a new generation of "smart" anti-personnel mines for its armed forces, despite the Government's announcement last week that it would "work towards" a global ban on the weapons that kill or maim 2,000 people every month around the world.

Opposition MPs and groups campaigning for mines to be outlawed have responded by accusing ministers, including John Major, of a perpetrating a deliberate "sham" in trying to claim the Government was working for a ban, while actively modernising its own stockpiles.

The row over Britain's refusal to accede to international pressure to scrap all stocks of anti-personnel mines immediately — as several other nations have already done — follows comments by Ministry of Defence and Foreign Office officials that they were not "optimistic" that an acceptable level of support for the ban could be reached in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, they concede, Britain will continue with plans to modernise its mines.

According to MPs and campaign groups, far from helping rid the world of mines, Britain's "schizophrenic policy" threatens to undermine moves towards a ban by effectively "legitimising" their use. The deep contradictions in Britain's policy have also led to allegations that government sources set out to "deliberately mislead" the media. — *The Observer*

Leak shows crime crisis

Alan Travis

THE Government's claim to be "turning the tide on crime" was demolished on Monday by a leaked Home Office document which shows that the crime rate has been rising remorselessly for six months.

The leaked document also shows that the alarm bells are now ringing at the highest levels over the ways the rapidly rising prison population is outstripping all official forecasts.

The official minute records the proceedings at a regular meeting held by Richard Wilson, the Home Office's top official — the Permanent Secretary — with his most senior heads of department on April 22.

"Recorded crime in January had been 4 per cent higher than in January 1995, and in February 2 per cent higher than in February 1995," it reports as the Research and Statistics Directorate contribution to the meeting. It bluntly concludes: "Recorded crime had now risen for six consecutive months."

It is not a message which government ministers have been keen to communicate. Only last week, the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, when asked if he would make a statement on the "latest recorded crime figures", told the Commons that crime had fallen by 2.4 per cent in England and Wales during 1995 and by 8 per cent in the three years to the end of 1995.

Although he trumpeted the "historic fall" he made no mention of the fact that the official figures have been rising since September.

In Brief

RICHARD Branson, the head of Virgin and self-styled boy's own hero, is being sued for sexual harassment by a former senior manager who claims he fondled her breasts.

THE European Commission is considering whether there is a case for clawing back grants made towards modernising the East Coast main rail line from Edinburgh to London, which was handed over to a Bermuda-based company, Sea Containers.
Power takeover blocked, page 19

GAY couples living in council houses are to be given the same chance as married people to take over the property when one partner dies.

THE FIRST complaint by the Queen to the Press Complaints Commission, over an article estimating her fortune at $3.3 billion, was upheld.

DOCTORS were given the go-ahead to withdraw artificial feeding from a permanently unconscious patient in Scotland's first "right to die" case.

JUBILANT teachers called off a planned strike at a school in Nottingham after forcing the parents of a violent 13-year-old boy to withdraw him.

A DOCTOR arrested for stalking the Princess of Wales has been struck off the medical register because of drugs offences.

YOUNG children with hay fever and asthma should be kept off peanuts to avoid developing a potentially deadly allergy, according to a study in the British Medical Journal.

A PIMP who made up to $4.5 million from Brazilian women smuggled into Britain was jailed for 3½ years at Southwark crown court in London.

A 15-YEAR-OLD boy who caused another boy to lose the sight of one eye in an air rifle incident, hanged himself after being told by magistrates that he would have to stand trial.

DANIEL GOSWELL, who was struck over the head with a truncheon, was awarded record damages of £302,000 against the Metropolitan police.

TWO HUNDRED Amnesty International employees walked out on strike after an announcement that 19 jobs are to go at the international secretariat in London.

GUARDIAN journalist Maggie O'Kane received the 1996 Cameron Award for reporting "of the highest quality". The judges described her as a "truth-seeking missile, unhampered by fear".

£5bn VAT blow for Tories

Roger Cowe and Larry Elliott

THE Government was thrown into fresh chaos last week after its hopes of a vote-winning Budget were threatened by a Court of Appeal ruling that could cost the Treasury up to £5 billion ($7.5 billion) in back tax.

The new blow to the Government added to backbench gloom about the Conservative party's chances of clawing back Labour's huge lead in the opinion polls.

The judgment also contributed to the furore over the impact of European law, further angering Eurosceptic MPs.

The Treasury said it would appeal to the House of Lords against the ruling by two senior judges that a Customs provision which has been in force since value-added tax (VAT) was introduced in 1973 is wrong in its treatment of interest-free credit deals. As a result shops which have had to pay excess VAT for 23 years can now apply for repayments.

The Prime Minister said that the ruling did not threaten a tax-cutting electoral strategy or relations with the European Union and said any amount reclaimed would be far less than £5 billion.

Mr Major told a group of Midlands businessmen that he still had a target of a 20p rate of basic income tax and added: "These figures being bandied about so recklessly in the press bear no relation whatsoever to what the figures really are."

Customs and Excise officials worked through the night to analyse the full cost to the public purse of the judgment.

A spokeswoman said it was impossible to estimate the amount the Government might have to pay back, but counsel for Customs admitted during the appeal hearing that the sum would run to billions of pounds.

In the past five years alone shops have provided free credit worth more than £3 billion on furniture, electrical goods and similar products, according to the Retail Consortium, which said that one in six credit deals had charged no interest. Similar deals on car purchases could easily double that sum.

The case, decided on European law, infuriated Conservative Eurosceptics, who said it could cost the Government the election.

Peter Jenkins, a VAT specialist with accountants Ernst & Young, said: "My understanding is that the case was decided on a European directive. That makes it very difficult for Customs and Excise to appeal. It looks as if they have lost fair and square."

Bill Cash, a leading Conservative backbench Eurosceptic, said: "If it does mean a multi-billion pound payback, the impact on our Budget combined with the potentially devastating blow if the European Union wins a massive [cattle] slaughter policy would be a substantial setback to our chances of winning the election with tax cuts."

He added: "We need a complete evaluation of the impact of European policies on British sovereignty, government and commerce."

Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor, commented: "This is another example of Government incompetence."

Meanwhile, the Government's finances are threatened by an even more significant VAT case which was heard last week. The judgment, concerning VAT on company cars, could cost as much as £15 billion and is likely to be delivered in the next few weeks.

An unusual display of political unity emerged, with Labour's initial delight at the Government's discomfort turning to support for an appeal as it became clear that any repayments might not happen until after the next election.

Labour's Treasury spokeswoman, Dawn Primarolo, said: "It is not the consumers that will benefit from this decision, but companies".

The Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman, Malcolm Bruce, also urged an appeal.

Anger at race case collapse

Vivek Chaudhary

CAMPAIGNERS and lawyers representing the family of murdered black teenager Stephen Lawrence vowed to continue with inquiries into his death after the case against three men accused of his killing collapsed at the Old Bailey last week.

There were emotional scenes at the court following the family's decision to drop their private prosecution of the men after Mr Justice Curtis ruled the day before that vital eyewitness evidence was inadmissible.

Michael Mansfield QC, prosecuting, told the court that without the evidence there was "no reliable basis" for any jury to convict the men.

Shortly afterwards, Mr Justice Curtis instructed the jury foreman to formally acquit Neil Acourt, aged 20, Luke Knight, aged 18, and Gary Dobson, aged 20. They had denied that they, with others, murdered Mr Lawrence, who was stabbed to death at a bus stop in Eltham, south-east London, in April 1993.

The court had been told that Mr Lawrence, aged 18, was murdered by a mob of up to six white youths solely because he was black.

Imran Khan, the Lawrence family's solicitor, said after the acquittals: "Because not guilty verdicts were entered, we can not proceed against [the three men] ever again.

"The police have stated the inquiry continues, and if any further evidence comes to light, we will follow that up. The likelihood is we would proceed with another private prosecution against anybody else who it was suggested was responsible for the murder."

The family were saved from financial ruin after the judge ruled that prosecution costs, thought to be around £100,000, should be met from central funds.

Mr Lawrence's parents, Neville and Doreen, had raised around £70,000 through donations to bring the private murder prosecution, the fourth in 130 years, after the Crown Prosecution Service dropped proceedings against two white men in July 1993, saying there was insufficient evidence to secure a conviction.

Neville Lawrence said: "I believe in fairness. I don't think what happened today is fair at all." His wife was too distressed to attend court.

Mr Khan said the family were "extremely disappointed" that the judge had ruled out vital evidence from a witness who claimed to have seen the defendants take part in Mr Lawrence's murder. "We would have hoped the identification evidence could be put before the jury — something that happens in almost every other case. It is rare for a judge to make the decision but he did."

The collapse of the trial meant the jury did not hear video footage, shot by a secret police camera in Dobson's flat, which showed the three defendants were extreme racists accustomed to brandishing knives.



Dashed hopes . . . Neville and Doreen Lawrence PHOTO: MARTIN ARGLES

Green paper on transport set to backfire

Keith Harper and Rebecca Smithers

A DEVASTATING official indictment of the state of Britain's roads was withheld by the Government last week as its much delayed green paper on transport received a lukewarm response from environmental groups and the Opposition.

The survey of the national road network says that 13 per cent of motorways, 14 per cent of trunk roads, and 21 per cent of principal roads will need major structural repairs over the next four years. The Government has dramatically reduced its roads programme and the report says the overall picture is not improving.

The paper was criticised for its lack of substance and failure to provide a detailed conclusion to the Government's so-called "great transport debate", while even the pro-roads lobby and motoring groups expressed their disappointment.

The shadow transport secretary, Clare Short, said: "It has taken more than 18 months to produce a paper which is notable only for its incoherence."

The environmental group, Friends of the Earth, strongly criticised the Government for rejecting the use of targets to cut traffic levels. Its executive director, Charles Secrett, said: "The use of targets is the acid test of a sustainable transport policy. If the Government fails to incorporate them into its strategy for transport, there is no way it can determine the mix of policies needed to make transport sustainable."

Barclays on full alert

BARCLAYS BANK intensified security arrangements for its annual meeting this week in the wake of extortion attempts by the so-called Mardi Gras bomber, *write Ian King and Alan Watkins*.

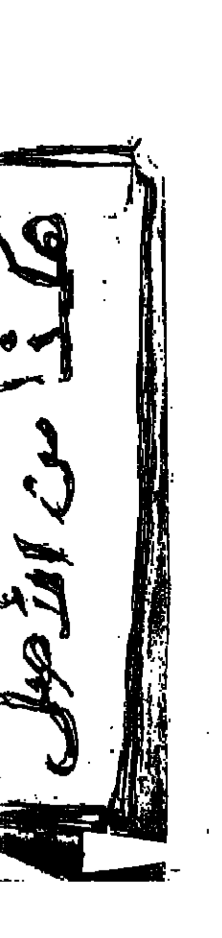
Barclays, which has been sent 25 home-made bombs by the extortionist over the past 16 months, fears that the bomber could attempt a "spectacular" at the meeting. In the most recent attack, last month, a small device exploded outside a Barclays branch in Ealing, west London.

Barclays is being advised on the meeting by Scotland Yard, which has handled all negotiations to date with the extortionist, and which initially corresponded secretly with him or her through the personal columns of the Daily Telegraph.

Barclays earlier took the unusual step of offering to pay towards the cost of a police and bomb disposal operation after a suspicious package blown up at one of its branches turned out to be full of its own documents.

The incident happened last week at Stowmarket, Suffolk, after a passer-by found a box-like object left against the wall of the branch in the town centre.

Police sealed off the area for more than four hours and called in an army team to examine the package before blowing it up.



India votes from the heart

INDIA WANTS to vote: the electorate may be disillusioned but it is certainly not apathetic. If there is anger at corruption, and despair at poverty, then even in the remotest villages the voters wish to say so out loud. In last Saturday's first tranche of this marathon election, for 160 million registered voters out of the total eligible list of 590 million, the turnout of around 60 per cent was only a shade less than five years ago. Dalits and low-caste Hindus who not long ago did not even dare to cast their votes against landlord interests are now fighting their own seats. Those who say that India has become cynical about politics may betray their own cynicism: democracy still counts, several hundred million times.

Whether it can solve India's problems is another matter. This is an election where the result is known in advance but not the outcome. The historical decline of Congress (arrested only briefly in 1984 after Indira Gandhi's assassination) will continue. The ultra-right Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will do better but not well enough. The centre Janata Dal (JD) and various break-away parties in the states will become key coalition building blocks. The left, with which JD is allied, will remain influential but apart. The outcome could still be a minority Congress government — especially if the prime minister, Narasimha Rao, is forced to appease his rebels by stepping down. The BJP can only succeed if it wins over the JD — a combination that has worked before but is inherently unstable. Most observers agree that whatever does emerge will be a shaky coalition unlikely to last the full term. This need not be such a negative prospect: it may be a necessary part of a longer transition.

The central issue to be solved by any government remains that of poverty and the transition will also reveal whether the modernisers can continue to claim that India's poor will begin to benefit from the new economic reforms. Their argument wins few supporters among the 30 per cent below the poverty line for whom official statistics showing low inflation are a daily insult. Yet an alternative economic policy has failed to emerge clearly. On Sunday, the BJP protested at Mr Rao's suggestion that it might lead India "the way of the former Soviet Union". Indeed, its opposition to the reforms has hardly gone beyond doing battle with Colonel Sanders. No wonder the financial markets are relaxed at the possibility of a BJP victory.

Political bargaining power has shifted to the regions and to caste-based groups within them. But India remains a semi-unitary state where the main issues have national resonance. The divide is much more between the great masses of the mostly rural poor, and the mostly urban one-third which identifies with the new reforms. For the latter the agenda is a new lifestyle, privatisation and the global market. For the majority it is water, prices and jobs: these issues still lie at the heart of India.

The calm after the carnage

THE CEASEFIRE in Lebanon has been greeted with enormous relief. An end to the murderous events in South Lebanon was long overdue: the inhabitants of northern Galilee were also entitled to a life outside bomb shelters. Though the agreement goes no further than the oral understanding reached two years ago (and is still unsigned), it is given greater weight by the composition of its new monitoring committee while the visible involvement of Syria opens a new diplomatic door. As Warren Christopher said after announcing the ceasefire, all the parties concerned were anxious to re-establish "a degree of calm". Even more so, he might have added, were the terrorised half million population of southern Lebanon. The timetable also imposed its own logic. Something had to be settled before the Sabbath and Shimon Peres's visit to the United States: otherwise the moment might have passed.

Yet this whole vicious circle of violence will only recur some time in the future unless the right lessons are drawn from it. There was little sign of that in the mutual quasi-electoral rejoicings of Mr Peres and Bill Clinton in Washington. Of course it is important for everyone — including, it seems Yasser Arafat and even President Assad — to set Mr Peres on course again, if by a narrower margin, for victory on May 29. The Likud alternative remains likely to pose a terminal threat to the peace process. Though Palestinians have had to grit their teeth, the PLO's commitment to alter its charter has already triggered the end of the Israeli Labour party's opposition to a Palestinian state.

Yet the agreement has legitimised once again a conflict in which civilians were targeted and held hostage in order to force concessions from the other side. Hizbullah was by no means an innocent party; yet its own indiscriminate firing of rockets was dwarfed by the wholly disproportionate action of Israel. Respect for civilian populations caught up in conflicts is stipulated in various international agreements. These are part of the furniture of civilised international life: we smash them at our peril — and thousands of individual lives too. The International Committee of the Red Cross had warned the warring parties of their duty to comply. Every violation of international humanitarian law further undermines respect for it, creates new precedents which may rebound on the violator, and poisons the ground for the future.

How the agreement will actually work is hard to gauge. Contentious issues were stripped out of it as they became impossible to resolve. It is not at all clear how a freeze on retaliatory raids can be ensured while the monitoring committee conducts its investigation to establish blame. Mr Peres has sought his reward in Washington for allowing Mr Clinton to claim a foreign policy success. The currency he is asking to be paid in is that of laser technology to deter future Katyushas. The US also sees the situation — as it has since the "security summit" — as one to be solved by the improvement of anti-terrorist techniques. Yet ultimately this agreement will only hold if it is a stepping stone to a political accord with Syria and the withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon's south. Guerrillas in an occupied land will never be halted by even the most sophisticated technology. Though supported by Iran, their real source of strength is the people of Lebanon, now mourning their dead.

Mass murder can be avoided

WHAT reaction can usefully be registered to the massacre in Tasmania beyond our natural horror? Such cases may be approached along two separate tracks: one examines the psychological make-up of the individuals who commit them, and the other looks at the technology which allows them to act with such devastating results. These are particularly painful but relevant questions to revive only weeks after the Dunblane massacre.

The social pathology of individuals — almost invariably male — who commit this kind of crime is by now familiar. They are single, loners, overly controlled, with low esteem and a strong grievance or delusion. Suicide often plays a large part in their fantasies and the orgy of killing will have been planned with care. They are more likely to have been regarded as "weird" than as mentally ill. Ideally such people should be identified by the community and by its social services before they have a chance to translate their fantasies into fact, but this is an impossible task and could too easily develop into a witchhunt against many harmless forms of social deviance, driving completely innocent people into deeper isolation or even suicide.

The other route is to look at the means which, on these rare occasions, are employed with such devastating effect. Most cases involve a rapid-firing handgun or automatic weapon. Every time this happens there is a cry to tighten gun controls, as is now happening in Australia, where the prime minister, John Howard, has called an emergency federal meeting to review the law. The gun lobby says this is a reflex action: it may be so, but it is also common sense. These weapons deliver death on a scale wholly disproportionate to any emergency. The objection to an outright ban is that this would "drive the weapons underground". That is nothing new: there is already a market in illegal firearms. The real danger is of the whole problem being quietly buried as the shock of Dunblane, or Port Arthur, fades. The UK government should not wait for the outcome of the Cullen inquiry: it should ban weapons whose only purpose is to provide a lethal opportunity for acting out dangerous fantasies. To do less is a missed opportunity and an insult to all those, now or in the future, who grieve.

Colossus indifferent to the world it bestrides

Hugo Young
In Washington

AMERICA bestrides the world, but the colossus is bewildered. She doesn't know where to fix her gaze. Her responsibility has never been more solitary, but her attitude never more uncertain. In the Middle East, and Asia, and Europe, other outside powers count for little. But nor, often, does the US. Ask Warren Christopher, kept insultingly in an ante-chamber last week, on his 17th visit to Syria since becoming secretary of state.

In Washington over the years, I've heard much sibilant isolationism and many brands of loud imperialism. But I've never, until now, been regaled by such incoherence on one side, and such indifference on the other.

Politicians here have almost ceased to talk about foreign policy. There is a great question about the US's role in the world, but not even the beginnings of an answer is emerging, because there is so little political interest in a serious debate. The silence is jarring. After all, this isn't Tonga or Zimbabwe, closely though Washington, with its gypsy taxis and chaotic municipal services, sometimes resembles a Third World capital. The world needs the US to have a world view, and there's no sign, whoever wins in November, of this need being satisfied.

President Clinton is a little more engaged than he was. In 1992 he declared for a domestic presidency but soon learned it wasn't available, and he has important achievements to his credit, notably in the area of trade. He also, finally, got committed in Bosnia. Whether the Nato military presence, as pledged, will end exactly on time this year is not a closed question. To some surprise, Clinton said the other day that an extension would remain under review, though Congress would doubtless fight it. Washington is more bullish than London about the chance of some kind of stability establishing itself. As long as nobody gets killed — an eventuality that the US forces are under stricter instructions than the British or French to avoid — the great American public won't notice what's happening, which is the way Clinton needs it to be.

What happens after the troops do depart, however, is unclear. Avoiding the 50-man ambush that could lose the election is about as far as the White House thinks ahead. An economic commitment will remain, and rapid reaction forces could stay camped in Croatia and Hungary. But what's missing is a concept. The critique of the Clinton foreign policy remains unchanged. Framework and linkage, the architecture of a world view, are absent. Robert Zoellick, a senior man in the Bush State Department and one of the few conceptualisers round Bob Dole, calls Clinton "strategically passive and tactically reactive", and the charge is hard to rebut.

It is visibly true in Europe, where Bosnia drowns out other strategic thinking. Washington wants Nato expansion and EU enlargement, and is deeply mystified by what most people regard as the crazy whoring after a single currency. But diplomacy is mainly confined to fire-fighting. Few people are thinking for the decade. At this turning-point of history, when the teaching role of the presidency could come into its own, this president, a gifted communicator, has nothing to say.

The alternative, however, seems to offer even less. With the Republicans, indifference reaches the lowest depths. Talk to the new conservatives in the Congress or the think tanks, and you hear not organised isolationism so much as sheer anomie. These supposedly razor sharp new-wave politicians, rigorous in deconstructing post-war conventional wisdom about welfare and economics, simply change the subject when you suggest that the US, willy nilly, must have a foreign policy. It is as if their assault on "government" must encompass a denial that any such entity is needed to express the US interest.

Some of this is campaign politics. It has become almost impossible for congressmen interested in foreign affairs to take a trip to foreign parts. If they set foot outside Peoria, they run the risk of charges that they're neglecting their district to junket in Budapest. During the cold war they had the excuse of getting to know the enemy. No such indulgence is available in a climate that permits a new-wave congressman to declare, as one recently did, that he has no interest in maintaining the Nato alliance.

The Republican leadership seems dimly aware that this may not be quite good enough. The eerie Newt Gingrich, faded godfather of the Republican new-wavers, has an idea that he should try to internationalise his insular zealots, assuming he is still the Speaker after November.

GINGRICH himself is more globalist, though with a novel way of advancing the cause. The Bismarckian model does not obtain. Instead of trying to define a US global role, he is investigating a massive Internet hookup whereby legislators round the world can talk about problems and solutions to deal with welfare, drugs and other problems they share. Foreign policy as exchange and mart.

Gingrich will not be president and he has long lost his role as prime minister to Clinton's constitutional monarch. The alternative to Clinton's incoherence is in the hands of Dole who, among the other encrustations of a lifetime in Washington, retains the label of an internationalist Republican.

Even Dole's friends are restrained in their discernment of anything that could be called his world view. He's a case-by-case legislator, seldom troubled by the desire to make links and frameworks. He gives the impression of a man so consumed by the complexity of the alliances he needs to conduct a winning election campaign that he dare not have a clear opinion about anything very much. Nobody expects Dole to assume a new dimension. He will become, if he wins, the leader of the world. But, like Clinton, he will shrink from making sense of that. The foreign policy professionals will do what they can, which is often quite a lot: see Richard Holbrooke's second-rank official who fixed Bosnia. Of vision and strategy, the unique endowments of the political leader, the US and the world seem likely to be long deprived.

Brazil's landless face long and hard battle

Dominique Dhombres in Rio de Janeiro puts the recent massacre of peasants by police in historical perspective

IN 1872, the liberal-minded André Rebouças, a leading figure in Bahia society and a friend of Dom Pedro II, launched a virulent campaign against big landowners. He explained in newspaper articles how urgent it was to change the landowning structure of the country and create a class of democratically minded small peasants.

His ideas took on a special relevance in May 1888 with the abolition of slavery, for which he had also long campaigned. Freed slaves fled the sugar plantations, and the big landowners panicked: what was going to become of their virtually empty estates? Was there not a risk they would be overrun?

Those fears played a crucial role in triggering the proclamation of the republic in November 1889. Once the monarchy had thrown rural society into confusion by freeing slaves, the big sugar and coffee planters suddenly came out in support of a conservative republic which they thought would ensure their property rights were respected. Rebouças's Utopia was swiftly forgotten.

When President João Goulart came to power in 1961 he took several measures that the affluent classes regarded as revolutionary. These included the expropriation of large uncultivated estates and their redistribution to landless peasants. Estate owners were particularly outraged because the compensation they were offered consisted of government securities and not cash.

At the same time, Peasants' Leagues brandishing red banners struck terror into the landowners of the poor Nordeste region — and helped to precipitate Goulart's overthrow by the military in 1964 and the introduction of a 21-year-long dictatorship.

This historical background should be kept in mind now that the agrarian issue has come back into the forefront of the news: on April 17 military police massacred 19 landless peasants who were demanding the right to settle on an uncultivated estate at Eldorado dos Carajas, in the south of the Amazonian state of Para.

A constant feature of Brazilian history has been the existence of huge estates which are inefficiently managed or only partly worked, while large numbers of men and women wander in search of a patch of land to cultivate. Big landowners expect local authorities to provide them with protection against the ragged hordes. Whenever necessary, they call on the services of mercenaries, or *jagunços*, who are often dropouts or petty delinquents.

Brazil's landowning structure still bears the stamp of its colonial origins. Down the centuries the Portuguese monarchy pursued a policy of allocating, in its Brazilian colony, huge chunks of land to those wealthy enough to operate them and produce goods for export.

This landowning system survived a series of production cycles, in which boom was followed by decline, in cacao, sugar, cotton, rubber and coffee. Apart from certain parts of southern Brazil, where the descendants of German and Italian immigrants set up small and medium-sized farms, land ownership on a huge scale remained the rule, and it is still quite common to find *fazendas* sprawling over several tens of thousands of hectares.

Brazil's swift urbanisation after 1945 further accentuated the trend. Only 25 per cent of the population lived in cities at the end of the second world war. That proportion has now been reversed. But the switch, which was caused by industrialisation and farm mechanisation, did not change land ownership patterns.

The sociologist Herbert de Souza, who has fought a long battle against hunger and poverty in Brazil, estimates that 1 per cent of the population owns 44 per cent of the country's land. "Brazil has the biggest concentration of land ownership in the world," he says. "We have estates that are as large as some European countries."

Landless peasants have been waiting for years for politicians to fulfil promises on land redistribution. In Brazil, 1 per cent of the population owns 44 per cent of the land PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL HARRISON

His claim is confirmed by the latest census, organised in 1991. There were then 3 million rural holdings, but a mere 58,000 of them occupied half the total area.

When the situation is so blatantly unbalanced, governments have little room for manoeuvre when trying to implement agrarian reform. Exaggerated promises have been made but not kept — which explains the scepticism and weariness to be found in the landless community.

Marshal Humberto Castelo Branco, the first president after the 1964 military coup, requisitioned more than 87,000 hectares of land and settled 7,400 families on it. The last president under the military regime, João Oliveira Figueiredo, expropriated 2.5 million hectares and made it available to 42,500 families.

After the return of civilian rule José Sarney, president from 1985 to 1990, promised to redistribute 44 million hectares to 1.4 million families. Only a tenth of that land was handed out.

Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who became president in January 1995, adopted a more modest approach. He pledged to provide 280,000 families with land in the course of his term of office. So far, the programme has fallen slightly behind schedule, as only 42,900 families were settled in 1995.

There are all sorts of hindrances. The courts are often very slow to grant the official land reform agency, Incra, the expropriations it requests. A bill aimed at simplifying and speeding up legal proceedings is still waiting to be dealt with by Congress. It could be that certain Incra officials in the pay of landowners have resorted to sabotage.

CARDOSO says agrarian reform is one of his priorities. He described the Para massacre as "unacceptable" and insisted that "this time" its perpetrators would be brought to book. He said Brazil's credibility abroad was at stake. The incident hastened the resignation of the agriculture minister, José Eduardo Andrade Vieira, who anyway wanted to step down.

The Movement of the Landless (MST), with the support of sections of the church, has long denounced the slowness and the ambiguities of agrarian reform in Brazil. It has organised most of the land-squatting campaigns. At the Eldorado dos Carajas demonstration, the police were particularly out to get one of its local leaders, 18-year-old Oziel Pereira. According to some reports, he was wounded, taken prisoner and finished off by police.

The MST claims that 4.8 million peasant families are looking for land. The organisation reckons that 140,000 families have already been settled on expropriated land and that a further 37,000 live in makeshift roadside encampments near estates marked out for squatting.

Brazilian church sources last December put the number of people who have died in land-related clashes in the past 10 years at 974. Massacres of the landless have been on the increase in recent months. The Eldorado dos Carajas slaughter particularly shocked public opinion because the victims had not moved on to an estate but were demonstrating by the roadside.

But once the initial shock had subsided, Brazil returned to its daily grind. The landless will have to go on waiting for some time before they can expect to see any light at the end of the tunnel.

(April 23)

Mongolia's president sets an independent course

Jean-Pierre Clerc

DURING his four-day visit to Paris, which ended on April 21, the Mongolian president, Punsalmaagiyu Ochirbat, made a point of drawing attention to the wind of change that has swept through his country in the past few years. "In 1990," he said, "we embarked on a great journey to join the common course of mankind — democracy and human rights, the market economy and economic development."

Two major changes have taken place in Mongolia, a vast country three times the size of France with a population of less than 2.5 million. When Mikhail Gorbachev introduced perestroika, Mongolia was able to distance itself from the Soviet Union after 65 years in its orbit. Mongolia was the world's second "people's republic", formed in 1924, and later earned the tag of "the 16th republic of the USSR".

The second was the election in 1990 of a constituent assembly, which finished its deliberations in 1992, the year the last troops of the former Red Army left the capital, Ulan Bator.

Since then, Mongolia has gone through a genuine "democratic transition", in Ochirbat's words. In 1992 a Great People's Khural (legislative assembly) was elected, in which the reformist-communist Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) dominated a deeply divided opposition. The following year, Ochirbat was elected president by universal suffrage at the age of 50.

Ochirbat, a mining engineer and former communist minister, who had been first president of the Khural and then head of state during the transitional phase, ended up breaking away from Marxist orthodoxy. He is now part of a power-sharing set-up with the MPRP government.

From an economic standpoint, the "great journey" has involved three main developments over the past five years: sweeping privatisation, which has so far affected 80 per cent of former state property; an opening up to foreign investors; and a virtually total lifting of price controls.

This has proved strong medicine for a population accustomed to being featherbedded by Soviet aid, which used to amount to a third of GDP. The years 1991, 1992 and 1993 were a difficult period. But, says Ochirbat, "we're now emerging from a state of shock".

The situation has not improved all that much, however, and some analysts predict that the "old-fashioned" communists will make a big breakthrough in June's general election. Ochirbat, though, is determined to put a brave face on things: "The democratisation process is irreversible."

The upheavals of the nineties have also affected foreign relations. Mongolia, which spent seven centuries under the thumb of the Chinese and almost seven decades under Russian domination, wants to reconstruct and preserve its independence — which is only normal for a people who, under Genghis Khan in the 13th century, built the largest empire the world has yet known.

Mongolia cold-shouldered Russia in the interests of a policy it describes as one of "equidistance", But it has also done everything in its power not to get drawn into an orbit it dreads even more: that of China.

After signing a treaty of friendship with China in 1994, Mongolia allowed relations to cool — insofar as that is possible with a neighbour that has 600 times as many inhabitants, and whose port of Tianjin is the main point of transit for Mongolian trade — after it discovered last year that its embassy in Beijing had been bugged.

The row soon blew over, largely because Ulan Bator was keen to improve the lot of the 3-million-strong Mongolian community living in the Chinese autonomous region of Inner Mongolia.

Mongolia's prudence does not, however, mean that it has overlooked its cultural affinities with Tibet, which stretch back more than 700 years. The Mongolians' rediscovery of Lamaist Buddhism, after the persecutions of the communist period, has even prompted the government to allow the Dalai Lama to visit the country once a year — to Beijing's great irritation.

Ochirbat, who holds ultimate responsibility for foreign policy and security, is pursuing a policy of openness aimed at persuading as many countries as possible — including the United States, Japan and those of the European Union — to take an interest in its independence and development and thus enable it to ease the grip of its two big neighbours.

(April 21/22)

'I was hostile to the policy of collaboration'

In Mémoires Interrompues, published this week, the late president, **François Mitterrand**, gives his views on some of the more controversial aspects of his career

ON HIS first impressions when he arrived in Vichy in 1942.

In the street I would pass those inimitable figures who are to be found in every period, and whose clean-shaven faces and vacant stares are redolent of the secrets of power. I saw them and their like live through three regimes over a period of half a century, always depositories of the holy sacrament and always imbued with the same self-importance — ministerial advisers, senior civil servants, a weird and slightly comical subclass who thought that government boiled down to a certain way of knotting one's tie or lighting a cigarette, finding out which way the wind was blowing, and fixing appointments that were supposed to remain secret but took place in bars where everyone met everyone else. I was offered a contract job in the [Vichy] administration.

On the allegation that he was a member of the French Legion of Fighters, a body set up in August 1940 to support Marshal Philippe Pétain's action.

I was not. Escaped or repatriated prisoners, especially those I mixed with in Vichy, were resolutely hostile to the Legion and the monopoly which it was intent on exercising — at Pétain's instigation — on the fighting community. We began our activities in reaction against the Legion. We took issue, we conspired, and that took the form of opposition.

On the allegation that he had to swear an oath of allegiance to Vichy.

That is false and above all absurd. I did not belong to the Vichy system. I was not an established civil servant but a contract worker. I did not have to swear an oath like so many others who subsequently pursued careers as dyed-in-the-wool Gaullists. Nor did I . . . sign a form certifying that I was not of Jewish descent.

I occupied only junior positions in Vichy. The question of how I reacted, what I thought and what my intentions were is of no interest since I was fulfilling no mission, did not occupy a useful or important post, had no influence on France's stance . . . had no hand whatsoever in the regime's decisions, and was involved in no controversy. In 1942 I was 25 and a complete unknown. I was by nature hostile to the policy of collaboration.

On his professed unawareness of the Jews' status at that time.

I realise it may seem surprising, but when I arrived in Vichy after spending 18 months in captivity it was true. It did not remain true for very long. We were in the so-called free zone. The Germans had not yet got there. You did not see any yellow stars. There was no visible persecution. Later on in 1942, as we witnessed increasing persecution, the expulsion of Jews from the civil service and the regime's obvious belief in collaboration . . . it was something of which we could no longer remain ignorant. From that moment on, I cut my moral and physical ties with that second-rate system, which turned out to be criminal.

On his decision to go to Vichy rather than to London.

[At that time] Vichy meant nothing more than a relinquishment, and we did not know much about London. No one in my view embodied the law or legitimacy. Pétain had been constitutionally and lawfully elected [head of state] by the National Assembly on July 10, 1940. But on the 11th and 12th, failing in the obligations that went with the vote which brought him to power, he perpetrated a veritable coup d'état without trying to dress up in legal language the contempt in which he held republican principles.

To my mind, that robbed him of the moral authority that he had claimed. De Gaulle, on the other hand, invoked a legitimacy derived from the permanence of the Nation, which it was his task to embody. What came later proved him right, at least as events turned out. But in 1942 a refusal to accept defeat, however noble an act, did not entitle anyone to govern France.

When Pétain came to power I thought — as almost everyone else did — that he could protect France. We had the feeling he was anti-German. He was a fine upstanding old man. As far as I was concerned, I observed the regime's inconsistency, its mean-minded conformism, its reactionary side and its harmful effects. So I very soon changed my mind.

On the various accusations levelled at him.

That I did not oppose the Germans from 1940 on, when I was a prisoner in Germany? That I was urged by Vichy to take up the senior post of contract worker for pay worth less than today's basic minimum wage? That I breathed, for a few months, the air of a town with which so many others filled their lungs greedily and without any harm to themselves? That I was received for 20 minutes by Philippe Pétain, as a result of routine work I had done to help prisoners-of-war, in the presence of two comrades, one of whom died after being deported? That I published two articles, not one word of which I would today disown? That I was awarded the Francisque [a medal awarded by the Vichy regime to those who, since the beginning of the war, had shown an active attachment to Pétain's work and person] along with the leading directors of mutual aid centres for prisoners-of-war and social work associations?

Of course I should have thought twice about the ulterior motives behind the award: it was a way for Vichy to disseminate its propaganda in hostile republican circles. I thought [the award] would make things easier for me in my underground activities. I was wrong. It was an error of judgment.

My first act of resistance was to go absent without leave [when I was a prisoner] in Germany. My second and my third was to have recommitted the same offence. My fourth was to have joined the fighting organisations. My fifth was to have left France for England. My sixth was to have returned in the middle of the war. My seventh was to have participated, in a position of responsibility, in the actions that led up to the liberation of France. And I have only mentioned those stages that can easily be described. But the true resistance was, from the very first day, that of the mind, and a daily refusal to accept the death of my country — all of which entailed an infinite number of unimportant acts that were not destined to go into the history books, but which filled my life for four years.



A young François Mitterrand on his wedding day in 1944 with his bride Danielle

On De Gaulle's broadcast appeal to the French nation on June 18, 1940.

Was the June 18 appeal the founding act of the Resistance? Today, it would seem to have been so, and it is rather impudent to ask the question. But at the time, although the earliest resistance fighters in France itself were delighted to learn that another kind of struggle was getting under way in London, they did not know much more than that. Spontaneously in Paris, Marseille, Lyon, Montpellier and many other places, people hostile to Vichy had formed small groups that dreamt of a German defeat and set about contributing to it.

Over the past 50 years, professional Gaullists have jealously kept the religious liturgy of June 18 alive. Had it not been for the fact that June 18, the keystone of the new mythology, was made a sacred date — which was in many ways justified — De Gaulle would not have drawn a veil, as he did, over the Resistance movement in France itself, whose role has been methodically and unfairly downplayed.

On his first meeting with De Gaulle in December 1943, in Algiers.

I can still see him there in his armchair, with his large hands dangling down as if he did not know what to do with them. He got up and greeted me in an unceremonious, rather relaxed and even affable manner [De Gaulle wanted the three prisoner-of-war resistance movements to merge, while Mitterrand "agreed to their being united" but refused to allow the new unified movement to be placed under the authority of a joint leader who was not to his liking].

That meeting did not go as badly as was reported. I felt deep admiration for the character, courage and intelligence of the leader of the Free French, even if I disagreed with his methods before going on to fight his policies. He was going through a difficult period, and his dogged determination to escape Churchill's and Roosevelt's ascendancy and preserve France's rights remains for me a model of political steadfastness. That was his greatest hour.

On De Gaulle's resignation as prime minister in January 1946.

When De Gaulle withdrew to Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises in 1946, I thought that part of the greatness of France was going to disappear and that those who welcomed the event were driven solely by a mean-minded desire to get back to their system of petty connivance. De Gaulle was not unpopular at the time, but he was not popular enough to be able to bully the establishment and impose his views on it.

He was not the only person to find himself in that situation. Winston Churchill, who had symbolised Britain's struggle against the Nazis, was defeated just after the military victory by the unassuming Labour politician Clement Attlee. That's the way things are. Should the people be blamed for their ingratitude? Clemenceau failed to get elected president of the republic in 1920. Voters preferred Paul Deschanel. It is as if the people, after carrying out a great act of heroism, feel nothing but weariness — weariness with their heroes. But then what kind of hero is not wearisome?

On his statement, when interior minister in Mendès France's 1954 government, that Algeria was "part of France".

It was legally correct because Algeria was made up of three French *départements*. It was politically wrong. I did not side with those who advocated independence any more than Mendès France did. It was not something that was possible in France's political circumstances. It is easier today to take a cut-and-dried stance. But I fought against the outrages of all kinds which [the Algerian] war caused us to commit.

On his decision, when justice minister in Guy Mollet's 1956 government, to leave legal matters in Algeria in army hands.

It was undoubtedly a mistake.

On rightwing parties.

The right defends such powerful interests that it has no compunction in eliminating those who stand in its way, those who hinder the smooth running of its affairs. That was what happened under the Fourth Republic, when the colonial lobby was powerful, and again when the bourgeoisie came out in support of De Gaulle — the same bourgeoisie that had supported Vichy from the start. And their hatred is all the greater when the troublemaker comes from their own ranks. In the eyes of that rightwing bourgeoisie, it is more or less normal for a blue-collar worker to vote communist, and a white-collar worker socialist, but when one of their own kind leaves the fold he is never forgiven.

On Pierre Bérégovoy's suicide in 1993.

Certain unprincipled journalists tried to get me to take the blame for Bérégovoy's death. It was in the interests of both the media, the other left, and the right to do so. It was above all vital that Bérégovoy should not be seen to have fallen victim to one of their campaigns [against him]. So . . . they tried intimidation; they brought their alleged professional solidarity into action; they issued threats; they huffed and they puffed when allusions were made to other press campaigns, such as the one which destroyed Salengro [Roger Salengro, Socialist interior minister in the 1936 Popular Front government, committed suicide following a smear campaign about his alleged desertion during the first world war]. When people are hounded as relentlessly as Salengro and Bérégovoy were, the only word that applies is murder.

On May 1968.

I am of course fully aware that among those who rebelled in 1968 there were sincere people who rejected the society of the time, its conformism and its opposition to change, people who acted with admirable dedication, self-sacrifice and abnegation; but that was not true of those who, on their behalf, "theorised" about the meaning of that "phoney revolution". You only needed to listen to them to realise where they had come from and what they embodied. In the final account, they were all budding notaries. I could just picture them at the age of 45 behind a pair of spectacles.

(April 23)

Mémoires Interrompues by François Mitterrand. Editions Odile Jacob, 250pp, FF135

Le Monde

Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani

Attacks by Israel Cost Lebanon Dear

John Lancaster in Beirut

STILL struggling to recover from the legacy of civil war, Lebanon has paid a steep price for Israel's 16-day offensive against Hezbollah Shiite Muslim guerrillas in southern Lebanon. Besides the toll in lives and property, the fighting has delayed major projects, alarmed potential investors and virtually shut down the country's slowly reviving tourist industry.

But if both sides stick to the cease-fire agreement announced last week in Jerusalem and Beirut after days of painstaking negotiations brokered by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the damage need not be permanent, in the view of economists and political analysts here.

The cease-fire agreement, in fact, ultimately may prove a boon to Lebanon's recovery if it succeeds in improving security conditions along the volatile Lebanese-Israeli border, according to Marwan Iskander, an economist and advisor to Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. "I would say that investors' confidence possibly could improve," Iskander said last week. "They could be justified in presuming things would be better. I do not see any long-term negative effect."

Not everyone shares his optimism. Analysts note that while the cease-fire agreement may succeed in easing hostilities for now, Lebanon has little say in determining its own fate. Israel still maintains troops in its self-declared "security zone" in southern Lebanon, while the rest of the country is dominated by Syria, which keeps 35,000 troops here.

If anything, in fact, Christopher's shuttle mission between Jerusalem and Damascus, Syria, has only enhanced the sense among many Lebanese that they have surrendered their country's sovereignty to Syrian President Hafez Assad. He has backed the guerrillas from Hezbollah, or Party of God, as a means of maintaining leverage in his negotiations with Israel over the return of the Golan Heights.

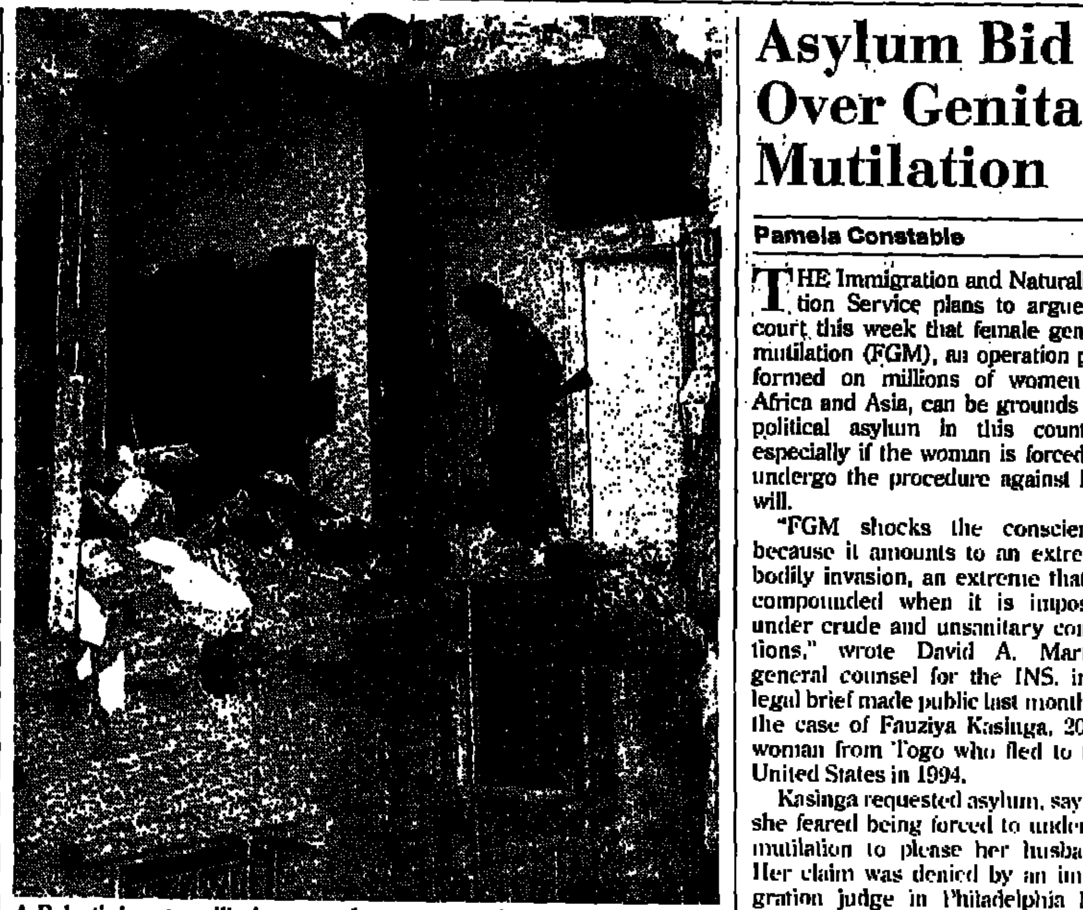
Notwithstanding Lebanon's subordination to its powerful neighbor — and the still-unfinished business of political reconciliation among the country's various Sunni Muslim, Shiite Muslim and Christian factions — the country had been making great strides. Lebanese capital was returning from overseas, construction was booming and in January, Beirut succeeded in restoring round-the-clock electrical service, a psychological boost to residents.

Israel's punishing campaign of air raids and artillery barrages has changed all that, at least in the short term. Southern Lebanon has borne the brunt of the Israeli assault, which has knocked out roads and water systems and destroyed or damaged countless homes, schools, medical clinics and businesses, according to U.N. officials.

"The conflict has been striking not just a particular group of people; it has hit the Lebanese population as a whole," Ross Mountain, the U.N. coordinator in Lebanon, said at the weekend. He noted that reconstruction activities will be made even more difficult because "the road system in the south is very difficult to negotiate, with major craters."

Although the United Nations and other international organizations have pledged to help repair the damage, the Lebanon also will have to contribute funds, compounding its already heavy debt burden and delaying economic development in other areas, economists say. The government already has been forced to postpone a $100 million bond issue intended for new housing.

Riad Salameh, governor of the Lebanese central bank, recently predicted that the Israeli offensive would cut the country's growth rate this year from a projected 6 percent to 3. Iskander, the Hariri adviser, said the fighting has significantly delayed important projects such as the construction of a new stadium in Beirut and the renovation and expansion of the international airport.



A Palestinian guerrilla inspects damage caused by an Israeli attack in Lebanon's Ain el-Hilweh refugee camp PHOTOGRAPH: MOHAMMED DHASHI

Although France has pledged to help rebuild electrical relay stations in Beirut destroyed by Israeli precision bombing, government officials say it could be months before power is restored in the capital.

The fighting has had a predictable effect on tourism, which had started to make a gradual recovery. Following the advice of travel companies that promised a surge in European visitors, Rafik Nsouli, who owns a Beirut taxi company, spent $150,000 on three 25-seat buses. Now he wishes he had waited. "I've had so many cancellations," he said. "I think we will have a dead period. For how long, I don't know."

The effects on the investment climate are harder to measure. Among those contemplating a return to Lebanon is Bob Hanna, 32, a Christian who moved to California 13 years ago after he "got shot by the Muslims" during the civil war. He had been thinking of selling his gas station in Pasadena and moving back home, but the latest flash of violence has given him pause. "I'm going to wait for a while," he said. "The way it's going right now, I don't see it happening."

But if the Lebanese proved anything during their 15-year civil war, which ended in 1990, it is their ability to recover from adversity. Throughout the latest crisis, the Lebanese pound remained relatively stable, suggesting that Lebanese retained their basic faith in the resilience of their economy.

And while many projects in the capital have been halted, the installation of sewers, telephone lines and other infrastructure continued in the war-ravaged central business district.

Show of Anger Wins Over Syria's Leader

William Drozdiak in Jerusalem

WARREN CHRISTOPHER stood up from the table at the hilltop presidential palace outside Damascus and snapped his briefcase shut. Despite his small ego and large reservoir of patience, the American secretary of state could no longer conceal his anger with Hafez Assad.

The Syrian president had stood him up last week, declining to receive Christopher at a critical stage in his mediation of the conflict between Israel and Shiite Muslim guerrillas in southern Lebanon. Assad never apologized for the snub, even after Christopher warned him that such behavior was intolerable if Syria ever hoped to establish any trust in its relations with the United States.

Now, two days later, Assad was playing games again, according to senior aides to Christopher. He was dragging out negotiations by dwelling on minor quibbles, scrutinizing every word and comma of a one-page text that could relieve suffering for hundreds of thousands of people driven from their homes by fierce rocketing and shelling across the Israeli-Lebanese border.

Christopher's gesture of pique worked its intended effect, aides said. The Syrian leader suddenly turned defensive and started showing he was serious about reaching an agreement. By Friday last week, Assad was promising to read the riot act to the leadership of the Lebanese guerrillas of Hezbollah, and compel them to stop firing rockets into northern Israel.

If the cease-fire that defused the latest Lebanon crisis is going to succeed, U.S. officials say, the person most critical to its success or failure will be Assad. For that reason, Christopher was willing to subject himself to Assad's exasperating ways through seven meetings lasting more than 22 hours.

Syria's 35,000 troops in Lebanon serve as the dominant military force there, capable of keeping in check the Hezbollah guerrillas. Many of the rockets sent from Hezbollah's mentors in Iran have been shipped through Syrian territory. "We recognize that Assad can shut down Hezbollah with a snap of his fingers. It's one of his best cards, and that makes him central to any truce in Lebanon," a senior U.S. official said.

"Assad still remains an enigma. No matter how many times we meet with him, there is still a mystery about what really motivates him," the official said. "But there is no question that he is the only game left in town. And if we don't deal with him, his capacity for mischief is substantial, as we just saw with the latest crisis in Lebanon."

Only a few weeks ago, the 65-year-old Syrian leader was seen as yesterday's man. Now, with seven foreign ministers paying court to him last week, he was back at center stage in the role he has always cherished: the man who can make or break a comprehensive Middle East peace.

Ever since he seized power in a 1970 coup, Assad has been perhaps the most perplexing interlocutor to confront U.S. governments over a quarter-century of Middle East peacemaking efforts. Besides his cunning, the former air force pilot also is known for his ruthlessness: When confronted by an Islamic fundamentalist revolt in the Syrian city of Hama, he did not hesitate in flattening the city at a cost of 10,000 lives.

Under Assad's authoritarian rule, Syria has provided safe haven to terrorists. The United States also has accused Syria of controlling the main drug smuggling channels through Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. The hashish trade provides a lucrative source of revenue — some estimates run to $900 million a year — and helps suppress any dissatisfaction within the military leadership, which reportedly takes a hefty cut.

Assad continues to exercise a special fascination for American and Israeli governments because of his extraordinary guile and the fact that no other Arab leader can ensure a calm northern border that Israel requires to secure a comprehensive peace with all of its neighbors.

Asylum Bid Over Genital Mutilation

Pamela Constable

THE Immigration and Naturalization Service plans to argue in court this week that female genital mutilation (FGM), an operation performed on millions of women in Africa and Asia, can be grounds for political asylum in this country, especially if the woman is forced to undergo the procedure against her will.

"FGM shocks the conscience because it amounts to an extreme bodily invasion, an extreme that is compounded when it is imposed under crude and unsanitary conditions," wrote David A. Martin, general counsel for the INS, in a legal brief made public last month in the case of Fauziya Kasinga, 20, a woman from Togo who fled to the United States in 1994.

Kasinga requested asylum, saying she feared being forced to undergo mutilation to please her husband. Her claim was denied by an immigration judge in Philadelphia last August, who said he did not believe her story. Under Clinton administration policies that have increased the number of asylum applicants held in detention while their claims are pending, she has been in prison virtually since arriving in this country.

The woman's case has attracted wide attention to FGM, a practice that has been condemned as political persecution by some immigration judges, but accepted as tribal custom by others. The Board of Immigration Appeals will hear her case this week, and INS officials hope the board will establish clear guidelines for all immigration judges.

"Running through all these cases has been the tension between wanting to protect people who are most severely at risk of persecution, and wanting to sustain the broad fabric of immigration control," Martin said last week. "This is a whole new realm of asylum doctrine, and this case can give clear guidance" on how to handle future FGM claims.

Lawyers for Kasinga said that they are pleased with the INS brief, because it suggests that the agency is distancing itself from the Philadelphia ruling. The INS is asking the appeals board to send her case back to the lower court for a more-thorough review.

In the meantime, Kasinga's supporters are seeking her release from a Pennsylvania prison, especially now that immigration officials seem to be giving her claim more credence. News reports have described Kasinga as being manacled, strip-searched and kept in cells with common criminals.

"For me this highlights even more the question, why is this woman still languishing in detention under horrendous conditions if the INS itself does not defend the judge's decision?" said Karen Musalo, a lawyer for Kasinga associated with the International Human Rights Clinic at the American University's law school.

Martin declined to answer questions about Kasinga's prison conditions, saying his agency was involved in litigation over the matter. But he said Congress has ordered people detained if they are likely to be legally barred from the country.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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Subway Vigilante Ordered to Pay $43m

Malcolm Gladwell

A NEW YORK Bronx jury on last week ordered Bernhard Goetz, the so-called subway vigilante, to pay $43 million in damages to one of the four black youths he shot on a Manhattan subway car 12 years ago.

The jury's decision was a stunning reversal for the 48-year-old Goetz, who was acquitted of attempted murder nine years ago in the same shooting and become a national symbol of urban rage and frustration. But this time around — in a civil as opposed to a criminal trial, before a largely black jury instead of a largely white one and at a time when crime in New York is on the down-swing as opposed to the upswing — the six-person jury swiftly ruled against Goetz.

It found he acted "recklessly" and "outrageously" in his attack on Darrell Cabey, now 30, who was left brain damaged and paralyzed from the chest down by one of Goetz's bullets.

The verdict itself is largely symbolic, since Goetz is unlikely to be able to pay more than a token amount of the $18 million in compensatory damages and $25 million in punitive damages the jury ordered. Goetz is a self-employed electronics consultant and, according to court papers, makes less than $20,000 a year. Under New York State law, the court can attach, or garnish, no more than 10 percent of his wages over the next 20 years.

The Goetz case arose from a incident on a downtown Manhattan express train in December 1984. Shortly after boarding the train, Goetz was confronted by four black teenagers, who asked him for $5. They said later they were panhandling. He said he thought he was about to mugged, and in response drew an unlicensed handgun, shooting all four. As Cabey lay on the ground Goetz stood over him and said, "You don't look too bad. Here's another," and fired one more time.

The verdict resulted from a civil suit filed by Cabey after Goetz was acquitted of the attempted murder charges in 1987, though found guilty of illegally possessing a gun. He served just over eight months for that offense. Although the civil case retraced many of the same steps as the previous trial, it took a very different turn. In 1987 the rising levels of crime, and increasing decrepitude of the subway system, made Goetz a sympathetic figure. During his first trial, his attorney was even able to downplay the awkward fact that Goetz is white and his victims black, portraying Goetz as a kind of pan-racial urban hero.

But in a city where crime has dropped markedly in recent years, and where the chaotic, graffiti-ridden subway system is all but a memory, Goetz was a much less sympathetic figure this time around. Cabey's lawyer also pounded home the racial dimensions of the attack, quoting racist statements Goetz made on the witness stand, and getting Goetz to concede that he had said, late last year, that Cabey's mother should have "had an abortion."

Calling Goetz "a bigot with a gun," Ronald Kuby told the jury, "I don't care how much you award in punitive damages . . . Bankrupt him. Make sure he never enjoys life as a rich man."

In response, Goetz's attorney Darnay Hoffman, conceded that his client was a "clown" and a "geek," who said some stupid things on the stand. But Hoffman denied Goetz was a racist.

The jury ruled that Goetz intended to shoot Cabey, that his actions were "shocking," "outrageous" and "reckless", and that Cabey was entitled to $2.2 million in damages for his pain and suffering, $15.8 million for future pain and suffering and $25 million in compensatory damages.

This trial generated nothing close to the massive public interest and controversy of its predecessor nine years ago. Back then, Goetz was defended by one of the city's best-known criminal attorneys and each new development in the trial drew headlines around the world. Word of his acquittal by an all-white jury caused people to dance in the streets in Goetz's downtown Manhattan neighborhood.

City tabloids, which once treated Goetz as a celebrity, as the man who took on New York's criminals and won, were more interested this time in the Unabomber. And even Goetz himself, who relished the role of avenging hero nine years ago, was not in court for the verdict.

"This case is truly the dog that didn't bark," said Fred Siegel, a historian at Cooper Union in Manhattan. "It didn't even rise to the level of a show trial. I'm stunned by the lack of echoes of this case. People don't want to talk about it. They just want to put it behind them."

Jackie O's Sale Makes History

Paula Span and Judd Tully

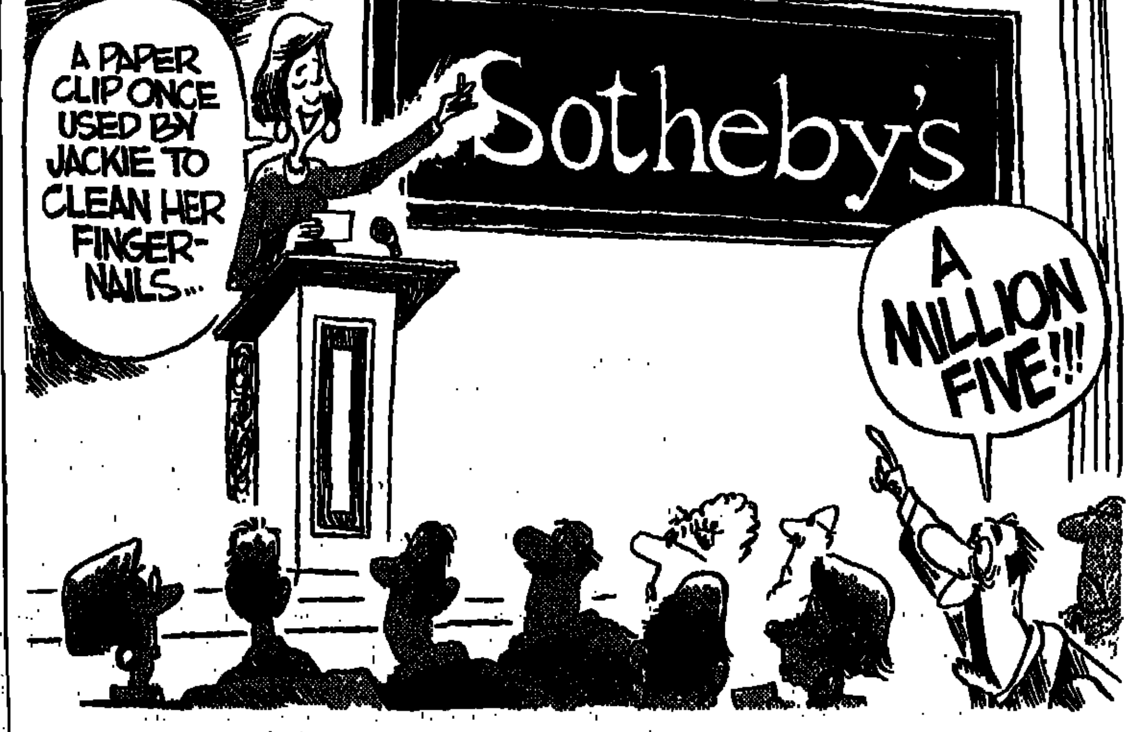
FOR FOUR days, they've spoken about History. Time after time, the hammer came down on another breathtakingly expensive item from the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis estate auction — which concluded in New York last week with the sale of a second JFK rocking chair (for $453,500) and her BMW (for $79,500) — and the victorious bidder invoked history.

"It's not a humidor, it's a piece of history," said Marvin Shanken, editor and publisher of Cigar Aficionado, just after he spent $574,000 for the walnut box that Milton Berle gave President Kennedy.

Same with the 40.42-carat diamond engagement ring that Aristotle Onassis gave to the president's widow. "It's got history and it's a once-in-a-lifetime thing," said Al Lippert, who spent $2.6 million on behalf of his friend Anthony O'Reilly, chairman of the Heinz Food Group.

But it was more than just history. Imagine the fate of a dented silver cocktail shaker once owned by Bess Truman. Or a desk on which Lyndon B. Johnson signed an important piece of legislation. Would such items have wrought the frenzy on display last week at Sotheby's, where the desk used by JFK to sign the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty sold for $1.43 million?

Items once owned by Jackie O sold for more than $34 million. In the attempt to explain what has fueled the paroxysm of acquisition — in which prices paid bore little relationship to pre-sale estimates, to market value or to many buyers' self-imposed spending limits — would-be analysts resort to the language of myth and romance. Bidders, they say, wanted to take home a tangible link to a supposedly more graceful, untarnished past; and Sotheby's helpfully provided the means.



Another first lady's mementos wouldn't "have that charisma, that magic," said Juan Molyneux, the architect and designer who bought Jackie's silver tape measure for $48,875 on behalf of a San Franciscan whose 24-room house he's restoring. "I don't think anyone is buying an object. What has been auctioned here is memory . . . a first lady who was touched by a certain magic, an allure."

In other words, the Kennedy fascination endures. In fact, now that the bidding's over, it's possible to put a kind of price tag on it. The final tally for the 5,500 items sold was $34,457,470. Compared to Sotheby's estimate of about $5 million for the property (widely considered a bit low), "the Jackie premium" therefore amounted to more than $29 million, give or take.

"People have bid and bought at this auction because she and President Kennedy have touched our lives in a profound and moving way," said Sotheby's Chief Executive Officer Diana D. Brooks at the conclusion of the sale.

Some of the artworks and antique furnishings-items of intrinsic value-incited less fervor than baubles and odds and ends more commonly found in thrift shops. "For example, there was a very attractive portrait by Martin Drolling," said Alan Salz, director of Didier Aaron New York, which deals in Old Masters and 18th- and 19th-century European furniture. The signed 1797 painting of a Polish aristocrat carried a pre-sale estimate of $80,000 to $120,000. It went for $167,500. "That would have happened had it been in any sale of fine art," Salz said.

Ditto for Lot 7, a gleaming 19th-century mahogany card table that went for $107,000. "It's not a hysterical price," said Leigh Keno, who has a Madison Avenue gallery of American antiques.

But such valuables were not what drove bidders to protracted duels that resulted in staggering prices.

"I wanted to own something that she wore against her skin," said Judith Bresler, a New York law professor who spent $6,900 for several of Jackie's bead necklaces ("her beatniky stuff") worth, by Sotheby's estimate, one-fifteenth that sum. "I wanted to own something that was used in an intimate way, as a way of having a connection with her."

A generational divide appeared to be operating here: Few of the 2,000 or so invitees who jammed Sotheby's salesrooms were under 35. People who remember where they were when JFK was shot are more likely to carry the Camelot flame. And more likely able to afford to pocket a piece of it — like the Aaron Shikler study for an official portrait of Jacqueline that went for $184,000.

Even the Sotheby's team was unprepared for the force and breadth of the phenomenon. The firm nearly doubled the number of phone lines it had planned to install and its staff worked longer and longer hours trying to keep up with the blizzard of faxed absentee bids. "No one would have thought the humidor or the golf clubs would have sold for what they did," said Senior Vice President David Redden as the sale wound down. "We're still surprised as each day goes by."

The final sales tally is not a record — though Jacqueline Onassis's possessions beat out Andy Warhol's, the Duchess of Windsor's jewelry trumped both of them, and so have other sales.

But in measurements of frenzy, the Onassis sale racked up unprecedented numbers. It sold more catalogues: All 100,000 of those bound are gone (at $90 in hardcover and $45 in paper) and another 16,000 that were left unbound were hastily assembled and are moving quickly. The anticipated $2.5 million in catalogue profits will go to the Kennedy Library and 17 other institutions, including the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The sale brought more absentee bids, too — approximately 125,000, when the previous record was 30,000. As for the prices, Brooks announced that the "multiples" — how many times higher the sales prices were than the estimates — had outstripped any known auction.

Massacre Coverup Revealed

John Ward Anderson in Mexico City

THE Supreme Court has ruled that a powerful former state governor and seven other officials tried to cover up a police massacre near Acapulco last year in which 17 leftist protesters were killed.

The ex-governor, Ruben Figueroa of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), earlier had been cleared by his own special prosecutor, prompting charges of a whitewash. Continuing protests forced President Ernesto Zedillo to order a special Supreme Court investigation, and Figueroa resigned as governor of the state of Guerrero when the court's probe began in March.

The court's findings, released last week, drew mixed reaction. Activists hailed the unveiling of a coverup and the unusual decision to hold members of the PRI elite responsible. However, the court did not pinpoint who had ordered the killings, and it left open what agency should now pursue criminal charges. Some activists worry that no one ever will be punished.

The massacre occurred in June 1995, in Aguas Blancas, a hamlet north of Acapulco in Guerrero, the scene of frequent political violence. State officials originally said the shootings occurred after truckloads of poor farm workers travelling to an anti-government rally were stopped by police at a roadblock and someone from the trucks shot at the officers. Police opened fire, killing 17 and wounding 23 of the protesters, all from the leftist Southern Sierra Campesino Organization.

After the shootings, state officials produced a videotape, made by a government worker, showing the bodies of the peasants with guns in their hands. But an unedited version, leaked to the private Televisa network and broadcast last month, showed the bodies with no weapons.

Subsequently, the mayor of a town near the massacre site released a tape recording of a conversation she had had with Figueroa before the shootings in which he said the peasants had to be kept away from the protest "at any cost."

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High Cost of 100 Million Mines

Former soldier **Frederick Downs Jr.** makes a plea to ban the weapon that kills civilians every day

A SOLDIER'S job is to kill and maim enemy soldiers. A bloody business. A soldier does the most personal kind of killing. He almost always sees the man he kills or wounds. He often hears him scream. He sometimes searches the body for documents. It is a brutal, traumatic, tragic occurrence that all countries condone and practice in the name of politics and their own best interests.

In the 20th century it has become commonplace for soldiers also to kill and maim civilians in the name of politics and in the best interest of their country. With the development of weapons of mass destruction, such as napalm, cluster bombs and poison gas, killing enemy soldiers is easier, faster and more impersonal. Killing civilian men, women and children in the process becomes an acceptable byproduct. When it happens, it's called "collateral damage." Because these weapons have become so powerful and so pervasive, we have come to accept larger and larger numbers of civilians as part of the body count.

But an impersonal killer of so many people is something to be feared because it stirs our most basic instincts of survival of the human race. The international community has responded and in many cases — nuclear weapons, gas, cluster bombs — has with great success restricted or banned their use.

The world will not stop war in our lifetime, but as nations have become more civilized they have concluded that some weapons are too horrible to use.

One weapon of mass destruction, however, has so far been largely ignored. It is the land mine. It kills 10,000 civilians a year and maims another 20,000. It does so indiscriminately, often long after the war in question is over.

And it is proliferating: An estimated 100 million mines are set to explode around the world today, with an additional 2 to 3 million planted each year.

The only difference between mines and other forms of mass destruction is that mines kill one or two at a time — but constantly. The mine, a cheap piece of plastic and metal, continues to function until it disintegrates.

Its victims are farmers and children and, as we saw recently in Bosnia, soldiers who have come to keep the peace.

This week in Geneva, the United States and other governments are meeting to discuss the issue of land mines at a UN-sponsored weapons summit. I am told that they will be considering limits to mine use, such as clear markings and automatic deactivation devices.

I wish them well, but they are on the wrong course. The question should not be how can we go on using land mines, but how can we get rid of them? Already, Canada, Germany, Australia, the Netherlands and over 20 other countries have said they will no longer use anti-personnel mines. What about America? The leader of the world should act like a leader and announce to the countries in Geneva that we will immediately oppose the manufacture, export and use of land mines.

President Clinton has said that he supports an eventual ban; the Pentagon looks like it's going to say that "eventual" means the year 2010. But mines are killing civilians as you read this. The time to make a statement is now, when the subject is on the table and the world is watching.

There are some military arguments in favor of mines — Defense Secretary William Perry, for example, said in March that they have helped maintain the fragile demilitarized zone between North and South Korea — but many more against them.

I was a soldier once and I am sad to admit that the best we can hope for in these times is to have soldiers kill only soldiers. Land mines are not a soldier's weapon. No soldier wants them. In March, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf and a dozen retired high-ranking generals wrote to the president in support of a ban, saying that it "would not undermine the military effectiveness or safety of American forces." The military has plenty of other weapons, the generals wrote, equating mines with poison gas in that they are "hard to control and often have unintended harmful consequences." I have dealt with those consequences around the world. Last year I attended a conference in Phnom Penn, Cambodia, where the International Society of Prosthetists and Orthotists was struggling to find the best methods of getting artificial limbs to victims in the impoverished Third World.


A young victim of El Salvador's war. The country is overwhelmed by the need for prosthetics

Cambodia is a country where the humanitarian groups think they have one of the more successful programs to provide limbs. Part of the reason is that over the 20 years the country has been at war, there's been time to perfect the art. There are estimated to be 20,000 amputees in Cambodia, a small country where every night the roads are mined and farmers put mines around their houses for protection from everybody: government, guerrillas, thieves and marauders.

The problem in Cambodia, as in dozens of other countries ravaged by war, is that there is not enough money to keep up with demand for artificial limbs.

I have traveled for the US Agency for International Development's humanitarian program called the War Victim's Fund to Vietnam, Laos, Sri Lanka, El Salvaldor and other countries to develop programs to build limbs for civilians. AID has sent others all over Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia.

There are other countries and other humanitarian groups doing the same thing and there is never enough money, time, or manpower skills to keep up with the need for artificial legs and arms, as real ones are blown off every day.

One of the awful ironies about a mine, for its victims and for all of us, is that the person who steps on it suffers exactly the type of harm intended: random, sudden and far from the sight of the soldier who planted it. Unlike the shelling of a town square that makes the evening news, these victims become impersonal. If a soldier does not see the person he kills, the death means little. In turn, we read about the numbers of deaths and amputees produced by land mines but we do not see the man, woman or child who suffers.

During the war in El Salvador, I was touring a military hospital in San Miguel. In one hut lined on both sides with wounded soldiers, I was led to a bed on which lay a 7-year-old boy. He had stepped on a mine in his father's field two days before. Still in shock at what had happened to him, he looked up at me with large brown eyes full of terror. One of his skinny legs had been blown off at mid-calf, the other leg was raggedly torn from shrapnel, one of his thin, tiny hands had had two fingers blown off, shrapnel wounds were scattered about his body.

Someone explained that an army patrol had found him lying in the field. If he lived, he would be transferred to the civilian hospital and then back to his village. There he would live the life of a cripple for the next 50 or 60 years. At the foot of the bed, the boy's father sat and held his rimmed hat in both hands. He looked up at me in bewilderment. I had nothing to say.

In San Salvador, a group of 15 or so farm children who had each lost a leg to a land mine had been brought to a prosthetic center. A group of rich El Salvadorans had provided them with new clothes for the trip.

During the fitting process it was brought to my attention that one of the 8-year-old girls did not have any shoes. In order to protect the artificial foot a shoe would have to be worn. I gave her chaperone some money and told her to buy the girl a pair of shoes. Later on another little girl about 9 was crying because she had no shoes either. We ended up buying all the children shoes.

The children were happy and smiling — proud of their pretty flowered dresses, their new legs, their ability to walk without crutches, and all the attention they were getting. I was happy for their brief moment of joy, but I was also sad because I had seen this all before. The children would go back to their village, their little bodies would continue to grow and their artificial limbs would no longer fit. There would be no place for them to go to have new ones built, or they wouldn't have the money. The program we were developing for El Salvador would be overwhelmed by the need. Just as it is in every country with land mines.

There is no joy in killing either a soldier or a civilian. In the Jewish Seder there is a passage the leader reads that says, "Our rabbis taught: When the Egyptian armies were drowning in the sea, the Heavenly Hosts broke out in songs of jubilation. God silenced them and said, 'My creatures are perishing, and you sing praises?' "

Imagine how He must feel about collateral damage.

Frederick Downs, who lost his left arm to a land mine during the Vietnam war, is director of the Veterans Administration's prosthetic and sensory aids service.

Blacks Back Tough Criminal Penalties

Michael A. Fletcher

AFRICAN AMERICANS are more likely than the general population to be victims of crime, a reality that fuels their support of tough criminal penalties although they have little confidence in the criminal justice system, according to a new poll.

That ambivalence reflects the dilemma facing many blacks: They feel more threatened by crime, but they also feel more vulnerable to police brutality and harassment, according to poll results released by the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington think tank that specializes in issues relating to blacks.

The survey was based on telephone interviews in January with 1,596 adults, grouped by category: a national general population sample, a national sample of African Americans and a national sample of 18- to 25-year-old black males.

More than a quarter of black respondents reported that they or someone close to them had been a victim of violent crime in the past two years. Fewer than one in six people in the general population reported similar experiences.

More than half of blacks but less than a third of the general population said there were areas within three blocks of their homes where they were afraid to walk at night. And almost 62 percent of the blacks said illegal drug use was a major problem in their communities, while 40 percent of the general population responded similarly.

At the same time, almost 43 percent of the blacks said police brutality and harassment are serious problems where they live, a belief shared by only 13 percent of the general population. The poll also found that 48 percent of the black respondents favored the death penalty, while 72 percent of the general population supports capital punishment.

Katherine McFate, associate director of research and social policy for the center who analyzed the poll results, said the findings illustrate the dual frustration felt by many blacks when it comes to crime. "I think these results reflect blacks being frustrated both with being crime victims and frustrated with the police" and criminal justice system, she said.

In addition to crime, the poll results also reflected wide differences between African Americans and the general population on other issues, including school vouchers, and revealed differences, as well, between the attitudes of average African Americans and the policies embraced by many black civil rights and political leaders.

For instance, almost half of the poll's black respondents said they favored programs to provide government vouchers to help pay private-school tuitions, a program that has been opposed by many black elected officials. Three in four blacks polled said they favor a constitutional amendment allowing for school prayer, which also is widely opposed by black lawmakers. And almost three in four black respondents said they favored life sentences for people convicted of three violent crimes.

"Three-strikes-and-you're-out" legislation has been enacted in many states, but it has been criticized by many African-American leaders and others, who feel that blacks are disproportionately affected. In many of the states where the provision was enacted, it applied to all felonies, not just violent crime.

"Whether that is out of touch or not I don't know. I don't think so," said Eddie N. Williams, president of the center. "There are some issue areas where black leaders need to listen a little more closely to their constituents."

The Great Outdoors

As summer approaches, **Dennis Drabelle** looks at the season's crop of environmental titles

THE GUIDING spirit of David Quammen's magnificent new book, **The Song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinctions** (Scribner, $32.50), is Alfred Russel Wallace, who anticipated Darwin's discovery of natural selection only to be overshadowed by the better-connected naturalist. Wallace also spent eight years exploring the Malay Archipelago (today's Indonesia) and published Island Life, "the first major compendium of island biogeography," in 1880.

Evolution makes itself known with vivid clarity on islands, Quammen argues. In Indonesia, Wallace discovered species that were allied to but significantly different from those on the mainland and so gained strong evidence that the islanders had migrated there "in mainland form" and then evolved (as opposed to being plunked down there by acts of special creation). Although Quammen traveled widely in the course of his information-gathering, retracing Wallace's route through Indonesia plainly engaged him the most.

As interpreted by Quammen, Wallace's insights ultimately transcend their insular origins. "The evolution of strange species on islands," Quammen writes, "is a process that, once illuminated, casts light onto its dark double, which is the ultimate subject of this book: the extinction of species in a world that has been hacked to pieces." That is, when habitats are fragmented, species can be isolated on "islands" (e.g., wildlife refuges) too small to support populations with enough genetic variety to withstand such hazards as simple inbreeding and sudden catastrophe.

For many years the author of Outside magazine's "Natural Acts" column, Quammen has pulled off the tricky feat of stitching great patches of complex science into the quilt of a rattling good (and true) adventure tale. This may be the finest book on the environment since E.O. Wilson's Biophilia.

Deserts may not be as physically separate from us as islands, but they have a similar effect on our imaginations. "As the smallest North American desert," David Darlington writes in **The Mojave: A Portrait of the Definitive American Desert** (Henry Holt, $25), "the Mojave seems to have exerted an outsized influence on the public imagination." And recently that desert, which stretches between Los Angeles and Las Vegas, has also exerted an outsized influence on the political agenda. After a long struggle, the last Congress passed legislation establishing two national parks and a national preserve there, only to have an appropriations committee in the current Congress vote the Park Service a single dollar to manage them.

Such polarized views are commonplace in the stories Darlington tells — of miners and preservationists, of puerile off-road vehicle users and the hapless officials obliged to police them, of flying-saucer nuts and holistic healers and a man who finds conspiratorial links among bigwigs named George. The Mojave, indeed, has a way of playing host to offbeat celebrities, among them Maj. Henry Robert, once stationed at a local fort, who later wrote Robert's Rules Of Order, and Pope Shenouda, prelate of the Coptic Church. Although Darlington has only scratched the Mojave's surface, he has written a classy introduction to a most colorful place.

No less colorful is Thurston Clarke's witty, engaging **California Fault: Searching for the Spirit of a State Along the San Andreas** (Ballantine, $24), a travel book that, like the fault, slices through California at a diagonal. Clarke went from northwest to southeast, "starting in the small north-coast city of Eureka and ending at Bombay Beach on the Salton Sea." En route he encountered people even more squirrelly than Darlington's Mojave's denizens, including a man whose headaches seem to anticipate earthquakes; and Annie V, a 70-year-old hippie who took that alphabet-letter surname only because otherwise the phone company wouldn't have listed her.

The fault zone (I'm tempted to call it the greater fault) comprises a depressing number of towns dominated by malls, and one of Clarke's dead-on tirades has to do with the nexus between shopping and sex. "I followed several . . . couples, noting how often they sealed a purchase with a sidewalk kiss, and how as their bags became heavier and made them wobble from side to side like refugees off a boat, they leaned against one another more, held hands, hurried purchases, and spent less time in stores but bought more, as if approaching some consumerist climax."

Clarke covers some development vs. preservation issues and sticks in a sub-plot about a westering ancestor of his, whose followers mysteriously ditched him after he got them safely over the mountain passes. But mostly California Fault is a portrait gallery of flaky personalities. It gave me much pleasure.

I opened **American Nature Writing 1996** (Sierra Club, $15 paperback), edited by John A. Murray, with trepidation: Something about the title and the publisher put me on the lookout for essays in which the noble author takes his or her exquisite sensibility for a walk in the delicate local woods. Happily, there is relatively little of that.

JAMES KLIGO writes suspensefully about the hornets that built a nest into a window of his house. Gary Nabhart celebrates a cactus patch that has continued to grow untended for 500 years since being planted by Indians. Robert Finch takes the reader on an outing to save pilot whales that have beached themselves onshore of Cape Cod Bay (in doing so, he gets "a faceful of whale breath, and, surprisingly, it smelled clean and fresh, like the smell of ozone in the air after a storm").

Nothing nostalgic or sentimental about **Who Owns the West?** (Mercury House, $14.95 paperback), however. In this collection of essays both lyrical and blunt, William Kittredge's main purpose is to convince his fellow Westerners that the old ethos of consuming the landscape in boom-and-bust binges is passé. "We have taken the West for about all it has to give," he writes. "We have lived like children, taking and taking for generations, and now that childhood is over." Like it or not, he predicts, most of the West will survive on tourism, not mining or cattle-ranching.

Amid his philosophizing about the West, Kittredge surveys its writers, including Louisk L'Amour whose novels he considers farragos of "fantasy," and that keen craftsman Raymond Carver, whom Kittredge knew and raised hell with. Westerners, he concludes, had better start telling themselves — and living by — new stories. "If we ignore the changing world, and stick to some story too long," he writes, "we are likely to find ourselves in a great wreck."

ILLUSTRATION: CHRISTOPHER [illegible]

Persevering in the Promised Land

Jay Mathews

EAST TO AMERICA
Korean American Life Stories
By Elaine H. Kim and Eui-Young Yu
New Press. 386pp. $25

WHEN I lived in and wrote about China, Korea seemed a digression, a cold little hard-luck country that would never amount to much. It seemed as intrusive and irrelevant as a dish of *kimchi* at a roast duck banquet.

Then in 1980 I moved from Beijing to Los Angeles. There were a lot of people from Korea in Southern California. They were revitalizing the public schools, remaking inner-city commercial districts, invigorating health care services and politics and the arts. I recalled that my own family traced its origins to a cold little hard-luck country, an island just west of England that had suffered similarly from invasion and division and famine and war.

I counted surnames in the freshman register of my son's college. There were 19 Kims studying alongside just three Joneses and four Smiths. My son made a close friend, Bryant Park, a wonderful boy who is now a freshman at Johns Hopkins University. His father and mother, both Korean immigrants, seemed to be more conscientious citizens and parents than I was.

I had many questions, among them why sentiments like those in the preceding paragraph would as likely annoy as please the Korean Americans I was admiring. This irresistible collection of oral histories provides many answers. The Korean diaspora, sadly made newsworthy by the 1992 Los Angeles riots, emerges here as no American fairy tale, despite the inclination of Americans like me to make it so.

Elaine M. Kim and Eui-Young Yu provide much color and depth, somewhat flattened in spots by the heavy editing that some of the taped interviews apparently required. They also wait too long to explain a key term, *sa-i-gu*, Korean for April 29, the first day of the riots. Nonetheless, the stories shine. Rarely does a book cut so quickly into the heart of an immigrant community.

The first significant group of Koreans to reach American territory were welcomed as part of what now seems, nearly a century later, to be an unforgivably shabby scheme — the Hawaiian sugar plantation owners' plot to quash Japanese laborers' rebellion against bad wages and working conditions by bringing in compliant Koreans to replace them. Between 1902 and 1905 about 7,000 Koreans, almost all men, came to Hawaii.

That flow ended when Japan took full control of Korea in 1905 as a result of its victory in the Russo-Japanese War. Tokyo's rule of Korea was full of horrors, and eventually led to the outburst of Korean immigrants to America after World War II.

KIM, a professor of Asian American studies at the University of California at Berkeley, and Yu, a professor of sociology at California State University, Los Angeles, let 40 Korean-Americans, including themselves, tell how this happened. It is difficult to stop reading after the first story, the odyssey of K.W. Lee from bitter and terrified Japanese kamikaze trainee to wise-cracking, award-winning American newspaper reporter and editor.

There are tales of a teenage gang member in a neighborhood near Los Angeles International Airport, of a gay AIDS worker in Koreatown, of a college student adopted as a child by a white couple through the famous Holt agency, and of an assortment of Americans who tell how they built lives out of nothing but a willingness to work 16 hours a day.

Assumptions and stereotypes evaporate. The image of Korean-American shopowners shooting at African-American looters in 1992 loses focus when seen through the eyes of people who remember that African-Americans gave Koreans the warmest welcomes in the 1950s. Often dozens of members of a Korean family came solely because of one black soldier's decision to bring home a Korean wife.

It seems romantic to middle-class Americans jaded by welfare-fraud stories to hear of Korean PhDs willing to run convenience stores just to get a foothold in America. This book illuminates the grit of these people, but also shows the emotional and familial cost.

Alexander Hull, a young businessman with degrees from the University of California at Irvine and Harvard, changed the spelling of his name from Hou because it was so often mispronounced. He received A's in school while spending hours each day helping his parents run a series of small businesses. At the end of his story he is nearly 33, proud of his parents, happy with his accomplishments, but finding himself wondering, with some excitement, how to create a life. He was not allowed to date while growing up. His father said, "Study hard now; after you've finished studying, you'll have plenty of women to choose from."

The hardest, sharpest Korean-American alloy is forged by Lt. Paul Kim, the highest-ranking Korean-American in the Los Angeles Police Department and an eyewitness to the tragedy of 1992. He grumbles about Korean-Americans who stereotype other Americans while they are being stereotyped. He complains of Korean Americans who drink too much, make money in the sex industry and don't teach their children independence.

"They're very fatalistic," he says. "They think it's hopeless, that Koreans are hopeless dingalings who should be occupied by other people. They think they should kiss up to big-power people, that that's how you get ahead."

Yet when they act on a good idea, he admits, they are remarkable. Kim said he did not like the idea of a big Korean peace march after the riots. A thousand terrible things could have happened. But instead it went well, and afterward, "they cleaned the whole place up, including the park. Does anybody know this? I have never, never seen anybody do this kind of thing in my whole police career."

UK power takeovers blocked

Simon Beavis and Chris Barrie

THE British government halted a growing rebellion among senior Tory rightwingers last week when it ignored the advice of its own civil servants and the Monopolies Commission to block two sensitive electricity industry takeovers worth $6.8 billion.

In a move which stunned the industry and the City, wiping nearly $1.5 billion off power shares, the Trade Secretary, Ian Lang, said that plans by National Power and PowerGen to take over two regional electricity companies would damage consumers and should be blocked.

The decision was widely seen as a bid to call a halt to the tide of takeovers that has engulfed the sector in the past year. Mr Lang has also faced complaints from the Conservative party's leading rightwing dissidents, John Redwood and Norman Lamont, that to allow the bids to proceed would crush competition and damage privatisation.

The decision means that National Power will not be able to proceed with its $3.4 billion bid for the Maidenhead-based regional electricity company, Southern Electric. Its smaller rival, PowerGen, will not be able to relaunch its $2.9 billion bid for Midlands Electricity.

The electricity regulator, consumer groups, Labour and Tory rightwingers had come together in an unlikely alliance to warn that allowing power station operators to own the companies which sell and distribute power locally would lead to the exploitation of consumers.

But the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC) argued, in a report released by Mr Lang last week, that the mergers should be allowed to go through with some limited controls.

Mr Lang said that while there was nothing "inherently objectionable" in companies both generating and selling power, "there would be significant detriments to competition if these mergers proceed" in the current state of the market.

Widespread criticism that the move was politically motivated appeared to be backed up by the emergence of key evidence given to MMC by Mr Lang's own civil servants, extracts of which are carried in the commission's report. An annexe of the report shows that the Electricity Directorate of the Department of Trade and Industry had raised few, if any, objections.

Civil servants argued that adequate safeguards could be put in place to ensure that competition was not harmed and could increase in the supply market.

Although Labour welcomed the decision to block the bids, it said government policy over the power sector was so confused that the entire industry should be subjected to a full MMC inquiry.

Its energy spokesman, John Battle, accused Mr Lang of "lurching from one policy to the next without any consideration for the implementation of long term, sustained competition".

With an American utility, the Atlanta-based Southern Company, poised to launch an $12.8 billion bid for National Power, it is clear that Mr Lang found himself under mounting pressure from Tory rightwingers to cool the takeover frenzy. By blocking last week's bids, he hopes to send a political message to overseas utilities that further takeover bids are not welcome.

His concern is understandable with an election looming. The Government wants to offer consumers lower prices through the pressures of competition. Generation is crucial to cutting power prices because it accounts for 52 per cent of those prices, according to the Centre for the Study of Regulated Industries.

For consumers, the prospect of lower prices from sharper competition is enticing, but far off. To date they have won few gains compared with the benefits passed to shareholders.

● The Government is considering smoothing the path of nuclear privatisation by giving the industry a dividend dowry of up to $150 million funded by the taxpayer so that it can offer a guaranteed pay-out to shareholders.

The move comes amid growing concern in Whitehall that, without pay-outs funded by the taxpayer, investors will take fright at the vulnerability of the nuclear industry.

The banking syndicate appointed to market the flotation was also meeting this week to agree an official valuation for the reactors. The Government's earlier estimates of $3.9 billion will be cut to $3 billion at the most following problems at all but one of the seven advanced gas-cooled reactors.

Auf Wiedersehen to a pet project?

The collapse of monetary union may be a painful but necessary step on the road back to economic sanity, says **Larry Elliott**

CHANCELLOR Helmut Kohl has been around for so long that he can doubtless recall the last time withdrawal from Europe was a serious proposition in Britain. But even the seen-it-all, done-it-all Chancellor may have been shocked by the briefing he got from John Major at Downing Street this week.

Mad cows and vanishing fish have breathed new life into a movement that has never given up hope that the 1972 decision to join the Common Market will some day be reversed, and that is now stronger than it has been for years.

Most of the running on Europe is being made by the right, but the left's Eurosceptics are also quietly marshalling their troops, with a new publication, There Is An Alternative (Campaign for an Independent Britain, £4.50), outlining what life might be like outside monetary union. Interestingly enough, the preface to the book was penned by Norman Lamont, an indication that the awkward squads of both ends of the political spectrum are finding common ground.

Mr Lamont was the first senior Conservative to put his head above the parapet and suggest that there might be circumstances in which Britain would have to leave the European Union. But there are plenty of others who agree with the former Chancellor when he says he cannot "pinpoint a single concrete economic advantage that unambiguously comes to this country because of our membership".

The reason Eurosceptics are back in business is quite simple. The Project — as enthusiasts for closer integration put it — is in trouble. Serious trouble. The current row over who governs Britain is not really about beef or fish; it's about economics.

The problem is summed up by a famous quote from Walter Hallstein, the first president of the European Commission: "The business of the Community is not business but politics." The Brussels mind-set has not changed. Economic conditions have.

The orthodox view is that following the Maastricht treaty to the letter is perfectly compatible with eating into Europe's jobless total. According to the theory, cutting public spending to reduce deficits and debt will lead to lower inflation and cheaper money, thereby unleashing a tidal wave of investment. Subsequently, locking currencies together and handing control of monetary policy to a European Central Bank will provide stability, lower transaction costs and put those nasty currency speculators in their place.

This argument — weak even when it was formulated during the inflationary upswing at the end of the 1980s — looks even more threadbare now. Europe is suffering from weak domestic demand, principally in consumption and investment, so now is hardly the ideal time to slash public spending and raise taxes. Indeed, the proselytisers for a single currency have all but stopped making an economic case and now dwell on the political ramifications if "the Project" founders.

Paris and Bonn insist that monetary union must go ahead because the alternative will be an unravelling of the integration process and the threat of rising nationalism. (Actually, the opposite is the case. The single currency project, if tested to destruction, will lead to greater poverty and economic alienation, and act as a breeding ground for every tinpot xenophobe across Europe.) But doubts are setting in.

In January this year, Jacques Santer, president of the European Commission, and Lamberto Dini, president of the European Council, declared that the Commission would make a priority of issuing Union bonds to co-finance Trans-European Networks (TENs). This was a significant departure for Mr Santer. The idea of providing a Europe-wide Keynesian boost had first been agreed at the Edinburgh summit of 1992, but had been allowed to lapse. Indeed, in a lengthy correspondence with Labour MEP Ken Coates, Mr Santer steadfastly denied that slashing budget deficits to hit an arbitary target would have deflationary implications. It was, he argued, predicated on a simplistic Keynesian model of the economy that had been rebutted in analysis by the International Monetary Fund.

The shift of emphasis indicates that Mr Santer has started to have second thoughts about the Maastricht blueprint. Certainly people like Mr Coates and the former Labour MP Stuart Holland believe that the argument may be inching their way.

Last week at a conference in Florence, Mr Holland argued strongly that a European investment fund financed by Union bonds could help lift Europe out of recession. The Union bonds would not count as debt for the member states, so would not show up in the Maastricht convergence criteria but, by financing the TENs and helping small and medium-sized enterprises, would provide a much-needed boost to investment spending.

Mr Holland says that the fund, although currently small, could expand to 60 billion ecu and have an important macro-economic impact, particularly in the regions, which could circumvent national governments by applying direct to Brussels for finance.

There is one big problem with this idea: the Germans will not wear it. If they are cutting back public spending by DM30 billion to hit the Maastricht convergence criteria, they are damned if they will allow Keynesian pump-priming by the back door. Theo Waigel, Germany's finance minister, is fond of quoting John Major: "If it isn't hurting, it isn't working."

That quote came back to haunt Mr Major, and it may do the same to Mr Waigel. For some, the idea that a cathartic collapse of monetary union is necessary before Europe can return to economic sanity is too frightening to contemplate. But it may be necessary.

Just as France enjoyed stronger growth than Germany before it sank into the permafrost of perpetual deflation, so Britain has been better off outside the ERM. If others want to embrace the economic madness of monetary union, we should wave them goodbye and wish them good luck. They will need it.



Major and Kohl after their London meeting this week

In Brief

CHINA and Swire Pacific have agreed a carve-up of Hong Kong's lucrative aviation industry. In return for an increased Chinese share in Cathay Pacific and Dragon Air, the state-owned China National Aviation Corp has abandoned plans to launch its own Hong Kong-based carrier.

CANADIAN media tycoon Conrad Black has launched another bid, at a higher price, to take full control of the Telegraph newspaper group.

FLEXTECH, the British cable and satellite TV programmer, announced a tie-up with media groups Sony and Time Warner to launch a satellite channel for Latin America. Mundo Ole will face stiff competition from a joint venture formed by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation to broadcast to the region.

A FALL of more than 4 per cent in Fiat's share price in a rising market was explained when the company announced that pre-tax profits in the first quarter of this year were down to 464 billion lire ($281 million).

THE European Commission has blocked Lonrho and Gencor from merging their platinum operations and warned that Anglo American will run into similar difficulties if it takes control of Lonrho. Between them, the three companies control 90 per cent of the world's platinum reserves.

FORD Motor Company faces a bill of up to $870 million as the American car maker moves to replace ignition switches in 8.7 million cars and trucks. Ford said replacing the switches, which may short-circuit and catch fire even when the engine is switched off, is estimated to be about $100 per vehicle.

ELIZABETH FORSYTH, the former Asil Nadir aide convicted last month of handling $568,000 of stolen Polly Peck money, is to launch an immediate appeal after being jailed for five years at the Old Bailey.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling rates April 29	Sterling rates April 22
Australia	1.9158-1.9181	1.9127-1.9165
Austria	16.13-16.15	16.11-16.12
Belgium	47.25-47.36	47.06-47.14
Canada	2.0551-2.0570	2.0580-2.0597
Denmark	8.84-8.85	8.83-8.84
France	7.74-7.75	7.73-7.75
Germany	2.2941-2.2964	2.2907-2.2925
Hong Kong	11.66-11.67	11.69-11.70
Ireland	0.9658-0.9671	0.9671-0.9685
Italy	2,355-2,358	2,343-2,346
Japan	157.71-157.91	161.06-161.24
Netherlands	2.5665-2.5698	2.5617-2.5644
New Zealand	2.1952-2.1987	2.2031-2.2064
Norway	9.85-9.87	9.84-9.86
Portugal	234.95-235.22	234.67-234.94
Spain	190.56-190.72	190.42-190.66
Sweden	10.17-10.18	10.13-10.15
Switzerland	1.8573-1.8599	1.8531-1.8552
USA	1.5083-1.5092	1.5109-1.5116
ECU	1.2208-1.2225	1.2209-1.2220

FTSE 100 Share Index down 84.8 at [illegible]. FTSE 250 Index up 9.7 at [illegible]. Gold down $1.00 at [illegible].

ASSOCIATION OF COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITIES

UNIVERSITY	POST	REF. NO.
AFRICA AND THE CARIBBEAN		
Botswana	P Educational Technology	W44907
Botswana	L Library & Information Systems	W44908
Botswana	L Mathematics Education	W44917
Botswana	AP Physical Education, Health & Recreation	W44923
Botswana	L Physical Education, Health & Recreation	W44924
Botswana	P Physical Geography	W44925
Botswana	L Human Geography	[illegible]
Botswana	L Environmental Quality	W44927
Botswana	L Climatology	W44928
Botswana	P Economics	W44959
Botswana	L Social Studies Education	W44960
West Indies (Jamaica)	P Banking & International Finance	W44961
West Indies (Jamaica)	P Organisation Behaviour/Human Resource Mgt	W44962
West Indies (Trinidad)	L/AL Mathematics	W44909
West Indies (Trinidad)	L/AL Computer Science	W44910
West Indies (Trinidad)	Campus Librarian/Deputy Librarian	W44911
AUSTRALIA		
Adelaide	SL/L Anatomy & Histology	W44915
La Trobe (Melbourne)	Chair in Zoology	W44930
Sydney	P/AP Physiotherapy	W44932
HONG KONG		
Hong Kong Baptist Univ.	P/AP Social Work	W44933
Hong Kong Polytechnic Univ.	ASP Therapeutic/Diagnostic Radiology	W44931
Hong Kong UST	Vice President for Research and Development	W44958
Univ. Hong Kong	L Anatomy	W44929
NEW ZEALAND		
Auckland	L Chemical & Materials Engineering	W44934
Auckland	L Pulp & Paper Engineering	W44935
Auckland	L Education & Science	W44936
Auckland	L Statistics	W44937
Auckland	L Computer Science (Experimental)	W44938
Auckland	L Computer Science (Image Processing)	W44939
Auckland	SL/L Sports Science	W44940
Canterbury	L Sociology	W44918
Otago (Dunedin)	SL/L Restorative Dentistry	W44920
Otago (Dunedin)	SL/L Tourism	W44921
Otago (Dunedin)	L Zoology (River Ecology)	W44922
PACIFIC		
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	AP/SL/L Food Technology	W44941
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	AP/SL/L Applied Chemistry	W44942
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	L Applied Physics	W44943
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	SL/L Forestry	W44944
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	SL/L Computer Science/Applicable Mathematics	W44945
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	SL/L/PTI/STI Civil Engineering	W44946
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	AP Economics/Finance	W44947
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	SL/L/PTI/TI Business Studies	W44948
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	SL/L Commctn/Electronic/Power Control Systems	W44949
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	STI/TI Communication Systems	W44950
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	AP/SL/L Language & Communication Studies	W44951
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	L Mechanical Engineering	W44952
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	Laboratory Manager/CTO Mechanical Engineering	W44953
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	SL/L Mining Engineering	W44954
PNGUT (Papua New Guinea)	Director of Computing Services	W44955
South Pacific (Fiji)	P Management & Public Administration	W44956
South Pacific (Fiji)	L Law	W44957
REST OF THE WORLD		
Cyprus	Vacancies in Economics	W44912
Cyprus	Vacancies in English Language & Literature	W44913

Abbreviations: P - Professor; AP - Associate Professor; ASP - Assistant Professor; SL - Senior Lecturer; L - Lecturer; AL - Assistant Lecturer; CTO - Chief Technical Officer; PTI - Principal Technical Instructor; STI - Senior Technical Instructor; TI - Technical Instructor

For further details of any of the above staff vacancies please contact the Appointments Department, ACU, 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF, UK (internet. tel. +44 171 813 3024 [24 hour answerphone]; fax +44 171 813 3055; e-mail: appts@acu.ac.uk), quoting reference number of post(s). Details will be sent by airmail/first class post. A sample copy of the publication Appointments in Commonwealth Universities, including subscription details, is available from the same source.



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MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CENTRE (MRC)
LIFE SCIENCES DIVISION

Professor/Associate Professor

Requirements: Ph D or equivalent training from a recognised university in life sciences; at least 6 years experience in R & D beyond the Ph D; proven experience in the writing of research proposals, research reports and publication in reputable journals.

Job description: Research in fields related to life sciences, particularly those that enjoy high priority within Namibia's ecological and socio-economic setting i.e. marine and fresh water fisheries, aquaculture, agroforestry, veterinary, medical sciences and biotechnology; acting as head of the Life Science Division of MRC as well as the Management Committee; related admin duties; teaching and guiding research activities of students within the relevant faculties.

Date of assumption of duties: As soon as possible.

Closing date: 10 May 1996.

Contact person:
Ms Dolly Nashandih-Endjambi at 09-264-61-206-3101.

Fringe benefits: The University of Namibia offers competitive salaries and the following fringe benefits: ● pension fund/or gratuity scheme ● medical aid scheme ● annual bonus ● housing scheme ● generous leave privileges ● relocation expenses.

Non-Namibian citizens may be appointed for a 3-year, renewable contract period.

Application procedure: Applications in writing, accompanied by a curriculum vitae, giving full details of present salary notch, increment date, the earliest available date when duty can be assumed and including three referees should be submitted to: The Head, Recruitment and Selection, University of Namibia, Private Bag 13301, Windhoek, Namibia. Preliminary telegraphic applications may be made via telex 56-727 or fax to 09-264-61-206-3843.



UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

ADMARK S5316/P573

Job Announcement

Finance & Administration Manager, Namibia

World Wildlife Fund (WWF), an international non-profit organization working worldwide for the conservation of nature, seeks a Finance & Administration Manager. The position is located in Windhoek, Namibia.

Duties:
Under the direction of the Chief of Party, plans, directs and oversees project activities in the area of financial management; coordinates and ensures that all administrative responsibilities, including human resources, computer services and office administration are in accordance with established WWF-US policies and procedures; and financial monitoring of subgrantees.

REQUIRES:
A Bachelor's degree in Accounting or Finance. A CPA is preferred. Seven years administrative and financial experience. At least three years experience in successful project management and supervision. Familiarity with USAID regulations in relation to cooperative agreements and grant requirements a must. Public accounting experience is desired.

Applicants should forward cover letter and resume by mail to: World Wildlife Fund, Human Resources, Dept. 520M, 1250 24th Street, N.A., Washington, DC 20037. NO FAX OR TELEPHONE INQUIRES, PLEASE.

SENIOR LECTURER/LECTURER

Required at the Institute of Population Studies, a self-financing centre within the University, with effect from 1 September 1996 for 3 years initially. Candidates should have UK and/or international experience in the application of social science research and training in improving the use and provision of family planning and allied reproductive health services. Salary on the Lecturer scale £15,154-£19,848 or on the Senior Lecturer scale £27,747-£31,357 p.a. (under review).

Information from Personnel, University of Exeter, Exeter EX4 4QJ; UK +44(01392) 263100 or e.mail Personnel@exeter.ac.uk quoting reference no. 4069. Closing date: 13 May 1996.

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IATEFL

Memorial service for

WR (Bill) Lee

There will be a memorial service for WR (Bill) Lee, founder of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL) at The British Council, 11 Portland Place, London W1N 4EJ on Friday 21 June at 3pm. Friends and colleagues who knew Bill or appreciated his work, either in language teaching or for the many other organisations he supported, are welcome to attend.

WWF

WWF - World Wide Fund for Nature International, the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organisation is seeking to recruit a

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR/ CHARGÉ(E) DE PROGRAMME

for its conservation programme in Madagascar

Based in our Programme Office in Antananarivo, Madagascar, the Programme Director/Chargé(e) de Programme will work alongside the Honorary WWF Representative in leading and managing a large multi-disciplinary conservation programme.

The main responsibilities of this position are:

- Management of the conservation and development programme working with several international donor agencies.
- Coordination of all technical activities, including the monitoring of strategic and operational plans.
- Development of policy work and applied research on biodiversity issues.
- Maintenance and further development of the excellent relations that WWF enjoys with its government and non-governmental partners.

The requirements are:

- A graduate degree in an environmental science.
- At least 10 years' post-graduate field experience with a strong background in conservation in developing countries.
- At least 5 years' senior management experience with proven leadership and interpersonal skills.
- Proven analytical and problem solving skills.
- Fluency in both French and English.
- Diplomatic skills and cultural sensitivity, as well as a passion for nature are important assets for this position.

If you are interested, please send your application with full Curriculum Vitae to Effie Blanchard, Human Resources Department, WWF International, Av. du Mont Blanc, 1196 Gland, Switzerland.
Tel: +41 22 364 9306, before 30 May 1996.

WWF is an equal opportunity employer.

UGANDA

Senior Health Economist/Health Planner

Important changes in health policy in Uganda, particularly in health financing and greater decentralised administration, have heightened the need to strengthen the health planning capacity of the Ministry of Health in order to enable decision makers to take better informed decisions about the future of the health sector.

This is a challenging opportunity for a Health Economist/Health Planner to work with the Government of Uganda at a strategic level. Based in the Health Planning Department (HPD) in Entebbe and with a full time counterpart, you will be responsible for working closely with senior officials and the Head of the HPD in developing appropriate systems to improve the allocation of resources in the sector and the management of these resources at central and district levels. You will also help advise on improvements to existing charging structures and administration at both central and district levels and contribute to on-going work on assessing alternative health financing mechanisms.

QUALIFICATIONS

In addition to a degree in economics or health economics, preferably at post-graduate level, you will have at least 8 years' work experience in health planning, economic analysis, policy development and/or health sector reform. Much of your experience will have been gained from work you have undertaken in one or more developing countries. Applicants should either be nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA) or Commonwealth citizens who have an established right of abode and right to work in the United Kingdom.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

You will be on contract to the British Government for two years in the first instance with the possibility of an extension to three years, in service to the Government of Uganda. Salary will be c.£40,000 p.a. (UK taxable). Additional benefits will normally include variable tax-free overseas allowances, children's education allowances, free accommodation and passages and annual fare-paid leave.

Closing date for receipt of completed applications is 24 May 1996.

For further details and application form, please write to Appointments Officer, Ref No AH304/MMcE/GW, Abercrombie House, Eaglesham Road, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 8EA, or telephone 01355 843352.

ODA is committed to a policy of equal opportunities and applications for this post are sought from both men and women.



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The Guardian Weekly

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Forestry Programme Development

Fountain Renewable Resources Limited (FRR) is a leading British forestry consulting company, specialising in providing assistance for developing countries. FRR require an enthusiastic team member to support the Programme Manager in generating new business for the company. The successful candidate will have experience in working on overseas forestry development projects. Candidates will ideally have experience in proposal writing. Applicants with strong report writing skills will also be considered.

Applicants should send their CV to: Nicholas Pyatt, Programme Manager, Fountain Renewable Resources Limited, Bell Tower, 12 High Street, Brackley, Northants, U.K. NN13 7DT. Tel: + 44 01280 705700, fax + 44 1280 706700 The Closing date for receipt of applications is Wednesday 15th May

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For more information contact: Dr John Hailey, Cranfield School of Management, Cranfield, Bedford, England MK43 0AL. Telephone +44 (0) 1234 751122 or fax +44 (0) 1234 751806.

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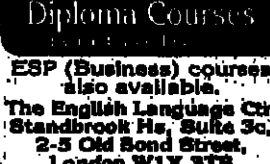
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Skillshare Africa supports development in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland by sending people to share their skills and experience.

RURAL EXTENSION ADVISERS

Mozambique

We are seeking people with at least two years agricultural extension work experience gained at a rural community level to provide technical support to extensionists in animal husbandry and crop production in the Province of Zambezia. You'll plan and supervise on-farm trials as well as train local counterparts. If your experience is coupled with recognised qualifications, so much the better.

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Contact the Cooperante Unit for an application form and further information. **Skillshare Africa, 3 Belvoir Street, Leicester LE1 6SL, UK. Tel: +44 116 254 0517 (24 hour ansaphone).** Closing date 1st July. Interviews week commencing 22 July. Please quote reference GW596.



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University of Durham

FACULTY OF ARTS

Professorship in the Political Economy of Eastern Europe, with special reference to the Czech Republic

The University, having been successful in the recent HEFC(E) initiative in Former Soviet and East European Studies, invites applicants for this Chair, to be filled from 1 October 1996. The holder of the Chair will be expected to play a leading role in the development of the University's new Ustinov Institute for East European Studies, co-ordinating existing expertise in cognate subject areas, and establishing new specialisms.

The salary will be by negotiation within the professorial range (minimum £31,999 pa).

For informal discussion of the post, please contact Professor Michael Prestwich, Pro-Vice Chancellor, on tel: 0191 374 7884, fax: 0191 374 7627, or e-mail: (m.c.prestwich@durham.ac.uk).

Further details may be obtained from the Director of Personnel, University of Durham, Old Shire Hall, Durham DH1 3HP, to whom applications (5 copies) should be submitted, including the names of three referees, by Friday, 7 June 1996. (Candidates outside the British Isles may submit one copy only). Tel: 0191 374 3140, fax: 0191 374 7253, e-mail: (Snr.Recruit@dur.ac.uk).

Please quote reference CO41.

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This course is designed for people who aspire to work as managers or analysts for innovative organisations. It benefits from SPRU's extensive intellectual resources as well as established international and industrial contacts.

The course will help students keep abreast of the most recent developments in management theory and practice, and involves an industry-based project. The course team, will work interactively with students to ensure that their career and personal development needs are fully satisfied.

The course is international in character. Recent graduates with good first degrees in science, engineering and social sciences disciplines, as well as those with working experience, are welcome to apply.

There are also a number of ESRC studentships and Sasakawa scholarships available for this course.

For more information and an application form, please contact Ms Gill Partridge, Graduate Studies Office, Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex, Mantell Building, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9RF. Tel: 01273 678168. Fax: 01273 685865. Email: sprupgadmission@sussex.ac.uk.

Overseas Opportunities

Richard Woodroofe & Associates Ltd.

Richard Woodroofe & Associates Ltd (RWA), an established Rural Development and Management Consultancy Company, is presently implementing participatory development projects in rural communities is S.E. Asia and Africa and now seeks applications from suitably qualified professionals with a commitment to the concepts of participatory planning and facilitation in capacity building and institutional support programmes. In addition to opportunities arising in current projects, RWA invites applications for new long term positions in district based development programmes in East and Central Africa. Immediate requirements are for:

Senior Facilitators

with 10 years' experience in rural development and/or local government in the developing world, of which a substantial proportion should be in Africa. Applicants should demonstrate skills in organisational development as well as experience in, and commitment to, the process approach of learning by doing.

District Based Facilitators

with a minimum of 3-5 years' experience in rural development and/or local government participatory planning, preferably in Africa, as well as a sound understanding of the organisational development skills required.

Applications, including a full CV and a statement of availability, should be sent to Richard Woodroofe & Associates Ltd, The Coach House, Royal Oak Yard, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 1PB, UK, or Fax No. +44 (0) 1765-600344, to arrive no later than 15th May 1996.

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Closing date: 28 May 1996

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For further details and an application form: UK-based applicants please write enclosing a 38p SAE (A4 size) marked Ref: GLR to The Personnel Department, Christian Aid, PO Box 100, London SE1 7RT, overseas-based applicants please fax your request on 0171-620-0719.

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TECHNICAL ADVISOR, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA : Deadline 1 June 1996

World Learning, Inc., a US based organization, seeks 2-year Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) Advisor for the Living in a Finite Environment Project currently being implemented by WWF and partners. The position is located in Windhoek, Namibia.

Duties:

1. oversee/support development of CBNRM activities;
2. TA/training/facilitation in CBNRM, community development, indigenous knowledge and management systems, gender analysis, institutional strengthening.
3. develop/implement participatory M&E systems
4. identify training needs/lead training

Requirements:

advanced degree; CBNRM experience: 7 years field experience; 3 years African community development or related field; work with NGOs, CBOs, community leaders, government agencies; excellent communication and training skills.

Attn:

Rhonda Frazee; World Learning Inc., 1015 15th Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington DC 20005. Fax: 1-202-408-5397.

Fixed-term Lectureship in Polish Economics

The School of European Studies and the Sussex European Institute, having been successful in the recent HEFC(E) bidding exercise in Former Soviet and East European Studies intend to fill the above post to start in October 1996. The successful applicant would undertake research, would teach at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, would teach specialist short courses and supervise native language and area studies in Polish/Poland.

The appointment will be on the Lecturer grade A scale £15,154 to £19,848 per annum (under review), for three years in the first instance and attached jointly to the Economics and Russian and East European Studies Subject Groups. Informal telephone enquiries may be made to the Dean of the School on (01273) 678805.

Further particulars and an application form are available from Ms Samra Ghani, Personnel Office, Sussex House, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9RH. Tel: (01273) 678202.
E-mail: S.Ghani@sussex.ac.uk
Closing date: 20 May 1996.

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Applications are welcomed to undertake supervised research in any area of politics or political economy. Departmental specialist research interests cover many varied aspects of comparative politics including: problems of democratic theory and practice; political economy of energy and food security; politics of ethnicity and nationalism; and the European Parliament. Regional specialisms include Europe, North America, South East Asia and Africa.

Applicants should write to: The Post-Graduate Secretary, Department of Politics, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT for an application form and further details, or telephone: +44 (0) 113 233 4383; fax: +44 (0) 113 233 4400; E-mail r.c.bush@leeds.ac.uk

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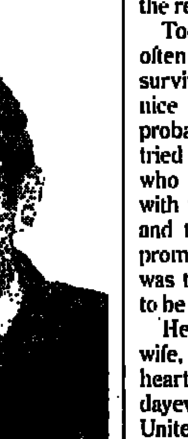
Dzhokhar Dudayev

HIS INDEX finger pointing skywards, the small man with the pencil moustache stared at you with black eyes burning with Chechen passion: "My life depends on Allah. It does not depend on the FSK [the former KGB] nor does it depend on your Russian government."

In a remote field in southern Chechenia, Allah called in the chips. That Dzhokhar Dudayev should perish at the age of 52, not at the hands of the KGB, nor of Russia's ground forces, but from a rocket fired from a Russian aeroplane, was perhaps an end fitting an exemplary former Soviet bomber pilot.

Bizarre though it may seem, the Chechen separatist leader retained to the end the characteristics and manner of a Soviet military man — small, wiry, immaculately turned out, and never on time. His interviews were lectures. His quotes were rants, littered with unusable conspiracy theories.

Dudayev was a man of bluff. He threatened to bring the civil war into Russian houses and prophesied that the conflict, which he claimed was part of a Russian plan to exterminate his people, would last for 50 years. On one occasion he put two old SS-4 rockets on two modern SS-20 mobile missile launchers to fool the Russians, with the largest army in Europe, into thinking that he had the potential of using long-range missiles against Moscow.



Dudayev: a man of bluff

Dudayev, the youngest of seven children, was born the same year that 200,000 Chechen men, women and children died in Stalin's mass deportation of the half a million strong mountain nation to Kazakhstan. Most died of hunger and cold in unheated cattle trucks in the bitter winter of 1944. His father and an elder brother died, but Dudayev survived and spent the next 13 years in exile in Kazakhstan.

The family returned to Chechenia in 1957, and in 1962 Dudayev entered the Tambov aviation school. On graduation he went to Yuri Gagarin Air Force Academy, the Soviet Union's highest pilot academy. A bomber pilot, he took part in the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and rose quickly to become commander of a division of heavy bombers, based in Tartu, Estonia.

This was a formidable role, but his relations with his Russian commanders weren't always easy.

His military career came to an end with the collapse of the Soviet Union. He was invited to join the executive committee of the United Congress of Chechen People (OKCHN), a political organisation in opposition to Moscow's placeman, Doku Zavgayev, leader of the Chechen-Ingushi Supreme Soviet and first secretary of the regional Communist Party.

Today's Russian army generals often maintain that "if the USSR had survived, Dudayev would still be a nice air force general". They are probably right. The Soviet military tried hard to keep the commander who had already been decorated with the orders of the Red Banner and the Red Star by offering him promotion. But Dudayev's answer was to say: "The highest honour is to be a simple Chechen."

He returned home with a Russian wife, Alevtina, an artist, but with the heart of a Chechen nationalist. Dudayev was elected chairman of the United Congress and in October 1991 staged an almost bloodless coup — only one deputy was killed — ousting Zavgayev and the remains of the Communist party in Chechenia, who had supported the failed coup against Gorbachev in Moscow.

Initially, Boris Yeltsin supported Dudayev, and looked the other way when Dudayev declared himself the winner of a falsified Chechen presidential election in October 1991. When Dudayev went on to declare independence from Moscow for the Autonomous Republic of Chechenia in 1992, he continued to receive both arms and money from Yeltsin's first radical democrat government, and the oil continued to flow until 1994.

However, as Dudayev's power base increased, so Moscow's interest waned. Only by the summer of 1994 did tension increase sufficiently, as a result of hijackings in the region, for the Russian president to accuse Chechenia of harbouring terrorists. When Moscow backed a series of ill-planned coup attempts, they thought Dudayev would be ousted in a matter of days. After large numbers of Russian troops were held captive, Russian forces invaded on December 11, 1994.

From refugee to brilliant Soviet general, to the most wanted man in Russia, Dudayev and his men staged the most brilliant guerrilla defence of the Chechen capital, Grozny, and the presidential "palace" that Russia had ever seen. Young, frightened conscript soldiers were cannon-fodder to the vastly more experienced Chechen commando fighters. But Dudayev was by the same token a lousy politician. On his shoulders partly rests responsibility for the loss of more than 40,000 civilian lives.

He was once asked what he would like to be remembered for. He replied: "I would like very much to leave behind me the good tracks of human love and humanity. But in this perverse world, such things are only achieved with great difficulty." Good tracks of human love and humanity, or the dirt tracks of devastation and war?

David Hearst

Dzhokhar Dudayev, separatist leader, born April 15, 1944; died April 21, 1996

Danger man of Vietnam

Tran Van Tra

GENERAL TRAN VAN TRA, who has died in Ho Chi Minh City aged 77, was the commander of the victorious communist army in the southern half of South Vietnam during the spring of 1975. He was a brilliant military leader, the equal of the far-better known Vo Nguyen Giap, who led the successful war against the French and is generally considered one of the century's great generals.



Tra: brilliant military leader

The official Vietnamese statement on his death described him as "absolutely faithful" to the Communist party, but Tra was anything but docile and disciplined. Like most great military strategists, he was daring and thoroughly sceptical of conventional wisdom. He was in difficulty with party leaders in Hanoi for most of the past 20 years, and a continuous source of embarrassment to them. He was a communist but also a thorough nonconformist.

In the autumn of 1974, Tra strongly opposed the more restricted and far less ambitious military campaign that the army's chief-of-staff, Van Tien Dung, proposed. Tra was certain that the generals living in Hanoi had no real sense of the Saigon army's abysmal morale. He forced their hand on the scope and timing of the campaign, but he also ignored many of the restrictions they attempted to impose on him.

The huge Saigon army capsized and abandoned most of the country without fighting, and in six weeks the war ended in one of the greatest victories in modern warfare.

General Dung wrote a memoir taking most of the credit, deeply alienating many generals and party leaders in the south. Tra spent the next years writing his own history of the war to set the record straight. The army's censors locked up the manuscript, but his friends in the southern party defied them and printed the volume dealing with the end of the war. The work was banned, but not before it sold widely.

Tra's next conflict with the official party came when he became the best-known leader of more than 100 retired senior officers and party leaders who formed an unauthorised veterans' organisation in 1987. Initially the group was intended to defend the interests of millions of veterans who have suffered from the new "market" reforms, which drastically cut social welfare and pensions, but in the process they took up the massive corruption accompanying these innovations and also supported a small pro-democratic minority within the party leadership.

At this point, Tra was potentially a very dangerous man, since his credentials and prestige were unrivalled. He had the respect, even awe of important senior officers in the army. Few like him — a known fighter with impeccable credentials and charisma — have existed in the history of communist Vietnam.

Tra hoped, even expected, that the banned portions of his authoritative, personal account of the war would eventually be published. If they are ever released in the form he wrote them, this remarkably original personality will fight one last battle. Tran Van Tra, ironically, may perhaps yet come back to haunt some of the officials who upon his death deluged him with insincere eulogies. He remains a dangerous man

Gabriel Kolko

Tran Van Tra, soldier, born 1918; died April 20, 1996

CLASSIFIED

Beauty and the yeast

Last week geneticists published the blueprint for a yeast cell. Soon they will disentangle the DNA of a tiny worm, and then who knows, writes **Tim Radford**

THE GENE hunters celebrated a landmark in Brussels last week. They have sequenced the genome of a fellow creature. Scientists from 37 laboratories joined forces to compose, from beginning to end, a four-letter alphabet code of DNA for another organism. Yeast will never seem so simple again.

The champagne corks were popping all over Europe for several reasons. One is because of the completion of a huge international task that involved counting 14 million base pairs of nucleic acid — 14 million rungs up the spiral staircase of DNA — that encode for 6,000 genes that make up a eukaryotic cell called yeast.

Another is because all life is DNA, and all life began from single-celled organisms, so the code for yeast is already revealing secrets about life everywhere on the planet. A third reason is that the completion of the task is a proof of the sophisticated computing power, the development of clean-room automata and laboratory robotics, and Nobel prize-winning ingenuity. This has enabled humans to take filaments which are only molecules thick from the chromosomes of a creature, and read it like a book written in an enigmatic language, and then decode its secrets.

Yeast is just the beginning. Soon scientists of many nations will be celebrating the completion of the genome of a tiny little worm called *Caernorhabditis elegans*. Then early in the next century they will be getting out the jeroboams in Europe, America and Japan again for the completion of the genome of a little weed called *Arabidopsis thaliana*. And at about the same time laboratories everywhere will be assembling the last bits of DNA code — 3 billion rungs of the helix ladder, 100,000 genes — of mankind. All this effort was unthinkable in 1953, when the young Crick and Watson deciphered the double helix.

Scientists at the Sanger Centre in Cambridge have played a major role in assembling the handbook of yeast — and the nematode worm. Frederick Sanger set out 50 years ago to work out the structure of insulin, and later developed techniques which made it possible for him and a partner to "read off" the entire genome of a virus.

"He showed us how to sequence on a large scale, and efficiently, and the basic methodology has not changed at all. The labelling has changed, and it has been automated, but the fundamental principle is precisely what he left us with," says Dr John Sulston, director of the Sanger Centre.

Sanger — one of a tiny handful of scientists to have won the Nobel Prize twice — is retired, but still in touch. Dr Sulston says: "I asked him with some trepidation whether he would mind his name being used for this institution, but he was actually rather pleased, although he said that it had better be a jolly good institution, or else."

The Human Genome Project began with a series of separate efforts to track down the causes of a number of illnesses that have scarred family lines — Huntington's chorea, cystic fibrosis, familial Alzheimer's and so on — and merged into a $3 billion worldwide co-operation to put together the DNA of the entire organism. There could be 4,000 genes for inheritable diseases, and geneticists now feel that most of the big killers — including cancer and heart disease — have their origins in the genetic "hand" dealt to each player in life's poker game. Alongside an ambition like this, the yeast chromosome seems small beer. It isn't. Yeast could be life's fine print.

"We also have eukaryotic cells, we have nuclei, we have chromosomes. The process of cell division, of cell growth and differentiation have much more in common with yeast than with bacteria. So in a sense when we acquire the 6,000 genes of yeast, as we have, we acquire our own fundamental cellular gene set," says Dr Sulston. Humans have other things too: they need a genetic kit to produce muscle, and specialised chemistry to communicate between cells.

"Those are the two things that we add on. But underlying those are all the cells that do the basic housekeeping chemistry of the cell, and those we shall find in yeast. It's all there. It's very important about genome sequencing that when you announce the completion of a sequence you are at the beginning of the road, not the end. We just have to understand it. It is like digging up a load of tablets suddenly from 5,000 years ago and trying to work it all out. We know we have got the whole lot. There is nothing missing, because it is all sequenced. We just have to learn to interpret it."

The next step is to crack the code of *Caernorhabditis elegans*. This is a nematode worm one millimetre long. It has only 959 cells (humans have billions) and it comes in two sexes: a male and a self-fertilising hermaphrodite. It goes through a whole life cycle in four days, which makes it handy for geneticists who want to see what genes actually do.

By 1998, the army of scientists all over the world working on *C. elegans* should have assembled the 100 million bits of DNA. The book for the nematode is one with 100 million letters in it. That is a book of 15-20 million words. Even the secrets of a 1mm organism require a text big enough to accommodate War And Peace 30 or 40 times over. They are valuable secrets: its short life-span permits scientists to examine the biochemistry of ageing, and examine the pathways of cancer. Four out of every five creatures on the planet are nematode worms: the creature is worth knowing for its own sake. And some of the most tragic and horrible tropical diseases are worm-borne. The research could provide its own swift reward.

But the people who do the sequencing aren't necessarily the people best equipped to take advantage of the new knowledge. For just that reason Dr Sulston wants the yeast and worm data published immediately and, as a matter of course, for everybody to share. "We are, curiously, being slightly criticised for this because the European Union part of the research has been inclined to hold its data back. They want to polish it and interpret it before it goes out. There is a bit of an interesting philosophical battle about this."

DR MIKE BEVAN, of the John Innes Centre, sees the latest landmark as just that: "An epochal sort of thing. Yeast is terribly important. Bread and drink, that's really important. People seem to be mesmerised by the human genome programme and disease. Not everybody in the world, luckily, has a genetic disease but all of us have to eat and most of us need a drink as well."

Which is why some scientific teams have already embarked on assembling the genome of the pig. Dr Bevan's laboratory — with partners in other nations — is in pursuit of the genome of arabidopsis. This is sometimes called thalecress. It is a weed that flourishes from Sweden to the Cape Verde islands, off the west coast of Africa. "It is also closely related to important crop plants, and the more we understand about it the more we know it will provide useful general knowledge that you can apply to all crop plants, even cereals," he says.

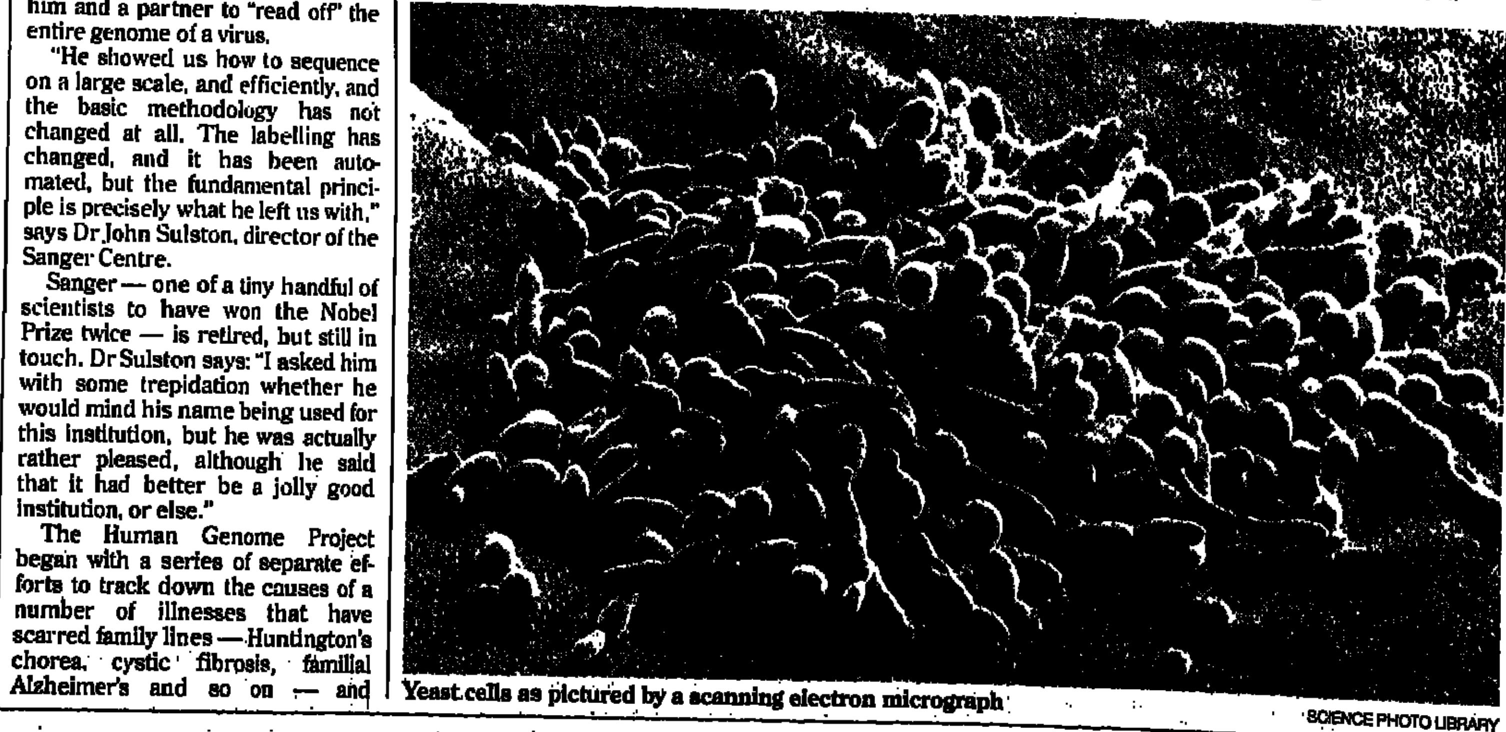
The research keeps throwing up surprises. If the genome is a biological text — a book with, for humans, 23 chapters, one for each pair of chromosomes — then the first oddity is that some books are much wordier than others. Arabidopsis probably has 15,000 or 20,000 genes, and wheat probably has about the same number. Humans have 100,000 genes in their 3 billion base pairs of DNA, but most human DNA, and most of the 16-billion pair wheat DNA, is what is known as "junk". One scientist has called this "evolutionary detritus — discarded drafts of essays that lost any meaning 100 or 1,000 million years ago".

Frederick Sanger: the father of genome sequencing

Dr Bevan doesn't much care for the word junk. He prefers to call it "low information content". There isn't too much of this in Arabidopsis: its genes are threaded closely along the DNA text like pearls on a string. That is the first surprise.

"The second is that we can identify the function of a significant proportion of these genes, perhaps 40 per cent. Out of those there are some very interesting surprises. For example, Arabidopsis synthesises a far wider variety of products such as terpenoids and alkaloids which we didn't know before. They are little biochemical factories as far we can tell from the early sequences. There are a lot of proteins in there, like a leukaemia virus receptor, for example. One wonders what this is doing in a plant."

The scientists pursuing the genome of drosophilia, the fruit fly and the nematode worm, are discovering machinery that will help to understand human DNA. The plant research starts from another place. The plant scientists want the material for healthier, more productive agricultural crops to feed the extra 90 million mouths that enter the world each year. "When you can understand how these genes work and manipulate them, you will be able to improve crop plant productivity, make it less prone to the vagaries of the weather", Dr Bevan says. "We are just scratching the surface as far as understanding is concerned."



Yeast cells as pictured by a scanning electron micrograph — SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY

Seeing is not believing

Michael Morgan on a 300-year-old riddle

IN 1688 the Dublin lawyer William Molyneux wrote to his friend, the philosopher John Locke, posing what has come to be called "Molyneux's question". He asked whether a person blind from birth could ever recover their sight, and if so, whether they would be able to name the objects that they saw. Suppose the blind person had learned by touch to distinguish a sphere from a rectangle. Would he be able to give the correct names to these objects the first time he saw them?

Molyneux's apparently innocent question was philosophical dynamite. If the newly-sighted blind man could name an object he had never previously seen, it would follow there are ideas in the mind which transcend specific sensory impressions. Such ideas could not have come from the senses themselves so they would have to be "innate". If there are such innate ideas they could include a belief in God.

A scientific answer to Molyneux has proved elusive. The best qualified to settle the issue are blind people who have their sight restored by a cataract operation. If they have been blind from birth we can ask them to name objects they have never seen before. Unfortunately, the assumption behind Molyneux's question is that the operation would restore the normal sensations of seeing. The assumption is probably wrong. In the absence of normal visual input during early infancy, the visual system does not develop normally.

Monkeys do not have names for objects, so they cannot know through language that a spherical object seen by eye is similar to one sensed by touch. In one experiment monkeys learned in the dark that certain shapes cut from pastry were good to eat, and others bad. In the light they unerringly reached straight for the "good" shapes. But the monkeys could have learned earlier in their lives that objects having a certain visual appearance also have a characteristic touch.

Now along comes the new technique of brain imaging to add an intriguing twist to the tale. When a part of the brain is not actually engaged in a task it goes out to lunch. When it is required to perform again it demands an increased blood supply. This increase can be detected by the technique of Positron Emission Tomography (PET). When we read, for example, there is an increased blood flow in the "primary visual cortex", which is the part of the brain that first receives messages from the eyes.

Blind people read not with their eyes but with their fingers, thanks to the invention of Louis Braille. But what part of the brain is involved when the blind read Braille? The answer, according to a recent report in Nature is: the primary visual cortex. The studied showed that in the brain of the Braille readers, some of whom had been blind from birth, blood flow increased in the primary visual cortex. In the sighted subjects, blood flow in the visual cortex was actually decreased by the demands of the tactile task.

The discovery is a complete surprise. Has the primary visual cortex now taken over the task of analysing the input from the skin?



The bell tolls . . . A Ducklington Morris practises on the village green — PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Dance, dance wherever you may be

You should make a point of trying every experience once, excepting incest and folk-dancing
—Sir Arnold Bax 1883-1953

THE MAY bank holiday, the spring festival of fertility and drinking outside pubs, marks the start of high season for Morris dancers. However, the loudest sound may be the creaking of ageing joints, *writes Maev Kennedy*.

The watching pint drinkers, torn between admiration and hilarity, assume that like public holiday traffic jams and January sales, Morris dancers are an immortal part of the English calendar.

The dancers warn their numbers are falling so fast that there may soon be no more bells on the green. The Ducklington Morris is an all-male Cotswold Whitsun side, charged with the job of dancing to ensure spring showers for crops.

Peter West, squire or leader of the side, would be happy with a light sprinkling of new dancers. His side is down to nine and frequently there aren't enough to practise the six-man figures. They had to adapt the traditional final figure-of-eight, the hay, to an unorthodox star shape. "If we lose many more it's going to be one man holding hands with himself."

He knows of dozens of other male sides in the same plight. Part of the problem is the refusal to use women dancers. Mixed groups do not share the recruitment crisis.

John Russell, of the 50-year-old Beaux of London City side, said: "We could be out every weekend, but we cannot get the dancers.

"We tried to overcome it by announcing classes for young people and we've had one person turn up. The Beaux were considered very exclusive. Now we'd take anyone."

Ducklington supported several sides in the 19th century. Of the thousands of sides in the country, only a handful have an unbroken link to Victorian times.

Ducklington Morris died out early this century, and was reborn, like most, in the seventies' revival of folk music. Since then the numbers have been falling steadily.

Mr West has appealed for members in all the local papers and on local radio.

Letter from Guyana Emma Beath

Embarrassment of riches

THE MANGOES are beginning to ripen and I am recalling the benefits and drawbacks of this brief season. My delight at the abundance of this wonderfully juicy and nutritious fruit last year was quickly tempered by the attendant rise in stress levels and loss of privacy. I am going through the same disillusionment this year.

Generally, every tree, bush or vine that bears anything of any interest is indisputably owned by someone who has exclusive rights to its bounty. But the large mango tree a few metres from our house falls into a distinctly grey area, because the owner of the house (and the tree) has rented out her property to us.

We naively assumed (prompted by our occupation agreement) that along with the house came the yard and the numerous fruit-bearing trees around it. Certainly the weeds that grow at an alarming rate, especially during the wet weather, are our responsibility. But not so with the more interesting products, especially the mangoes.

As soon as the tree begins to produce a fruit resembling something edible, open season is declared and the pelting begins. From day-break through lunch times and after school, hordes of the local Amerindian children, ranging from those just big enough to toddle to the burly and surly youths of the secondary school, troop through the yard and hurl missiles into the tree, bringing down a great deal of foliage and the odd mango with it. They stuff their pockets and go away satisfied, to be replaced by others who repeat the process.

NO MATTER that the fruit is a long way from being ripe. This is a minor inconvenience which can be overcome by eating the normally lush, juicy and sweet fruit hard, sour and green with hot pepper sauce and salt. It is hard to begrudge the children this feast, knowing that they may eat little else for the rest of the day.

Since my appeals to them to stop pelting the tree meet with nothing but bewildered looks and laughter, and have little appreciable effect, I have begun a bargaining system whereby I authorise them to climb the tree and bring down as many mangoes as they and their friends can possibly manage to eat and then send them packing.

This way I achieve my twin goals of having somewhat less disturbance, plus a steady supply of mangoes for which I haven't had to dash and fight off the competition whenever I hear the characteristic crash and thud as the fruit falls to the ground.

In a few weeks time this trying season will be replaced by the next phase in the process, when the ground will be a carpet of rotting fruits which one either collects or squelches one's way through, my clothes will be covered by orange stains, many people will have succumbed to "mango fever" through general over-indulgence and eating unwashed fruit, and I will be approaching the point where I'll be glad if I never see, smell, hear or step in another mango.

For some reason, the mango trees in this part of the country bear fruit for three months a year, whereas in the rest of the populated areas of the country the fruits seem to be available more or less throughout the year.

And as luck would have it, the tree in our yard seems to be the first in the area to bear fruit, thus attracting the most avid and mango-starved interest at the beginning of the season, probably a major contributing factor to our particular type of mango madness.

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

DOES dyslexia affect the Chinese, who read from top to bottom?

DYSLEXIA doesn't affect the Chinese, not because they read from top to bottom (all Chinese books nowadays read from left to right anyway) but because they have no letters to mix up. Chinese characters are simplified pictographs, which may even mean that people affected with dyslexia — who are better able to remember pictures than letters — are better at learning Chinese than others. — *Andy Nicholson, Shangrao, China*

IF ETIQUETTE dictates the bottom button on a gentleman's waistcoat remains unbuttoned, why do tailors put them on?

IF TAILORS left off the bottom button, wouldn't the next one up be the bottom one? — *Nick Riley, Sheffield*

THE button remained unfastened in deference to King George IV, who was prevented from buttoning his because he was so overweight (17 stone 8lb in 1797). James Gillray's caricature, A Voluptuary Under The Horrors Of Digestion, shows the prince wearing a waistcoat with six buttons undone. — *Samantha Johnson, Hanley, Staffordshire*

WHY IS it that lots of people used to be very leftwing when they were young and are now quite rightwing; but hardly anyone goes the other way?

THE political spectrum established at the time of the French Revolution has been moving steadily leftwards. This is why Thatcher, who in 1800 would have been described as a "Jacobin" on the extreme left, is now regarded as on the far right. Liberalism, the belief in personal and economic freedom, is now on the extreme right. Hence, people whose political ideas remain unchanged find themselves on the "right" as the political spectrum moves leftwards. — *H M Lowry, Marlborough, Wiltshire*

IN 1947 Bertrand Russell argued that Russia should be coerced into accepting international control of atomic energy; in 1961, aged 89, he was jailed for organising an illegal sit-down against nuclear weapons. In 1936 Jean-Paul Sartre did not bother to vote; in the early 1970s he sold revolutionary papers on the streets of Paris. Those who move leftwards may be few in number but they are the clever ones. — *Ian Birchall, London*

IF NOTHING sticks to Teflon, how do they make Teflon stick to the non-stick pan?

THEY cook scrambled egg in it first. — *Glenn Baron, Leigh-on-Mendip, Bath*

WHEN Teflon was being tested as a non-stick coating for pans, its anti-adherence properties resulted in separation of the coating from the pan's surface. This was overcome by treating the interior of the pan with sulphuric acid, pitting it and so giving the Teflon a surface to which it could adhere. Thus, the Teflon is stuck to the metal of the pan mechanically rather than chemically. — *Edward Barnett, Iizuka, Japan*

Any answers?

WHAT is the youngest age at which the cause of death can be registered as "old age" by a doctor? — *Nicola Mansfield, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire*

WHAT evidence is there to support allegations that German submarines were refuelled in Irish Free State ports during the second world war? — *John Shaw, Liverpool*

AS SUMMER approaches, the dawn chorus starts earlier and earlier. Do birds require less sleep during summer than winter? If so, should humans be able to adapt in the same way? — *Mark Burrell, London*

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ

A Country Diary

William Condry

MACHYNLLETH: Our willow warblers and our shelducks arrived at the same time. The warblers had flown maybe 3,000 miles from southern Africa. The shelducks had come only a few hundred metres from the estuary. But for both it meant the start of the breeding season. For a few weeks the willow warblers will fill the trees with heavenly song. The shelducks' contribution to the chorus will be less musical but just as much a part of the woodland spring as they fly between the leafless oaks to land in grassy clearings in parties of up to a dozen or so.

One morning I concealed myself in a thicket by one of their favourite trysting places and waited for them; and very soon they came circling over the wood, making a careful reconnaissance before fluttering down to stand a minute or two in watchful silence. Then began their courtship rituals among the wood anemones and the springing bluebell leaves. Necks lowered, heads nearly on the ground, they chased each other ponderously, filling the quiet trees with very loud, deeply resonant quackings from the females and pleasant whistlings from the drakes. Then they all stood upright and jerked their necks convulsively.

After that, their enthusiasm deflated; they stood for several minutes until a new wave of excitement passed through them. With their red beaks, green-lustred black heads, white bodies sashed with chestnut, black wings and tails and pink legs and feet, shelducks are fine-looking birds to see in the woods in spring. They nest in old rabbit-holes and similar dark places but I wonder how they choose the best hiding-place? Do they go down each hole to find out if anyone is at home? And what happens if they discover a vixen down there? Or a stoat or a polecat? House-hunting could be quite an adventure if you are a shelduck.

Gone, banging the door behind him

TELEVISION
Nancy Banks-Smith

"*OH, BUT* they say the tongues of dying men enforce attention like deep harmony," as John of Gaunt said. Following this up with a hymn to England and a brisk ticking off for his nephew.

The dying Dennis Potter, using emotional blackmail so cheerfully blatant it makes your eyes water, shotgunned the BBC and Channel 4 into marriage.

At his insistence they are showing Karaoke and Cold Lazarus, which he wrote against the ticking of the cancer clock, in tandem from the end of April to the middle of June. A discreet divorce will then be arranged between the competing channels.

Karaoke is predictable Potter. Cold Lazarus is not. It is a rollicking science fiction spectacular set some 400 years from now.

Not a nice place. You wouldn't like it. The world is run by a couple of comic, foul-mouthed monsters. Martina, renewed by youth pills and a string of young studs, makes the happy pills — and Slitz, a multimedia mogul, makes the pappy programmes.

England doesn't exist. Staring at Professor Emma Porlock (Frances de la Tour), an incarnation of formidable starchiness, Slitz says: "There may not be an England any more but there's still the English."

"There will always be an England," says Professor Porlock tersely. This got both a laugh and applause when it was first screened.

This England is preserved in the cryogenically frozen head of Daniel Feeld (Albert Finney), essentially Potter himself.

His frozen eyelids move. He is dreaming, as a dog dreams of rabbits, of a goal at Craven Cottage, of Wilson Keppel and Betty, of Oxford, of children singing "When I wake with the blest In the mansion of rest, Will there be any stars in my crown?"

There is always a snake. In this Eden where the bracken is thick as clotted cream, a boy is raped by a tramp. The dead head weeps. Slitz and his specialist in sexual arousal and erectile tissue are convinced the head's memories will be a TV sensation. And then the scientists realise the head is aware of its own violation.

Now watch on, assuming you were.

Potter went out with a bang. You could hear the door slam behind him. As Daniel Feeld says: "I'm out of here in the morning. I can afford to offend whomsoever I choose."

(Which reminds me, in Karaoke, Daniel Feeld disastrously uses the name of a real man in his play. Oddly enough, there is a real Daniel Field too, a well known, but not apparently well known enough, hairdresser. Desperate lines of dialogue like "Feeld with two ees" sound as if this hair-tearing point was noticed rather late in the day. Never mind . . . nice man . . . drinks his own shampoo to show it's wholesome . . . probably won't mind being described as "that drunken fool".)

The project went well over budget but Kenith Trodd, the producer of both plays, was determined not to skimp on the mint sauce in what he called the Last Supper of television drama.

I doubt if anyone enjoyed the Last Supper much either. What with everyone having to sit crowded together on one side of the table like that and Judas leaving in a huff.

There is one moment at the end of Karaoke where Albert Finney takes a mike and lip syncs to Bing Crosby's Pennies From Heaven. And the whole cheap joint falls silent listening or remembering.

Andrew Culf adds: Alan Yentob, controller of BBC1, and Michael Grade, chief executive of Channel 4 launched a staunch defence of Potter's work in the face of criticisms by tabloids and television watchdogs of more than 40 four-letter words in eight hours of drama.

Mr Yentob said after a screening of the opening episodes last month: "Dennis would neither needlessly offend the audience, nor patronise them."

Mr Grade said the controversy was hysteria about a few four-letter words. It would be perverse of those likely to object to sit down and watch it just to be offended. "It is not a major issue with this series because content and context is everything," he said.

The two dramas were made in accordance with the dying wishes of the playwright, whose previous work included The Singing Detective and Lipstick On Your Collar.

His request for a "fitting memorial" came in a Channel 4 interview with Melvyn Bragg two months before his death from cancer in 1994.

During the 80-minute interview, fortified by champagne, black coffee, cigarettes, and morphine, he asked for the unprecedented arrangement between the two channels "since it is my last work, and since I have spent my life in television, and since that life has not been insignificant in television".

Rosemarie Whitman, one of the producers, said: "The emotional commitment from all of us is huge — we cried every episode."

Director Renny Rye said: "I don't know if Potter was ever very pure, but if they are pure Potter, then I'm very pleased."



Keeley Hawes in Karaoke, one of Dennis Potter's two last plays

A big-boned gal cruises into town

MUSIC
Caroline Sullivan

WHAT greater sign of mass approval than to be invited to perform your new single in the National Lottery Show? Yet k d lang, who will do so this week, would not have been asked if the lottery had existed 10 years ago. Out lesbian singers, thin on the ground today, hardly existed then, and the mild-mannered, lower-cased kd was considered positively dangerous at first.

How a hit album and a Grammy changed perceptions! Since 1992's platinum-selling Ingénue, lang has not only been welcome at the best venues, she has become a benchmark of vocal elegance. Utterly dramatic and emotive, her voice is almost unparalleled in pop, and her following has been augmented by straight couples wooed by her ability to illuminate mainstream love songs.

But while heterosexuals buy her records, few go the whole hog by going to her gigs. The opening night of her first British tour in three years was overwhelmingly populated by gay women there to worship the "big-boned gal from Alberta" (those bones are draped in quiet trouser-suits these days, by the way, after an ill-advised flirtation with Italian designers).

Lang is singing better than ever at the moment, but seems to be treading water, careerwise. The current record, All You Can Eat, has enjoyed nothing like the success of its predecessor, forcing the capacity of the Birmingham Academy to be reduced "to preserve the intimacy of the performance". But if lang never regains the giddy heights of being shaved by Cindy Crawford on the cover of Vanity Fair, it is our loss.

Even if she did not own that voice, whose rare beauty leaves one stupid with awe, she would put on quite a show. She is easily more comfortable on a stage than off, drinking in the adoration of her girls, who approach the stage with flowers and sweets. Both a comedian and a tease, she dons an increasingly glittery succession of jackets while chatting about her unrequited passion for Uma Thurman.

Her just-us-girls manner makes us all honorary lesbians for the night — and it is worth noting that her casual references to her sexuality are more persuasive than Madonna's panting bisexual chic.

Much of the music harks back to k d's country roots. She resurrects old numbers like Two Cigarettes In An Ashtray and Roy Orbison's Crying, which lavishly dip into her reservoir of bathos. Country schmaltz, rather than her current lounge pop, is what lang was made for.

Lang surrenders to the majestic corniness of it all, backed to perfection by Ozzy Osbourne's former guitarist. The group includes a former Janet Jacksonite, whose belief that he was joining a "kinder, gentler" band must have been shattered by lang's penchant for dancing on the piano.

The contradictory facets of kathy dawn lang — dykon, glitzy celebrity, pop genius — mesh seamlessly and seductively in this show. I would lock up my daughters.

A touch of Dutch courage at the Tate

ART
Adrian Searle

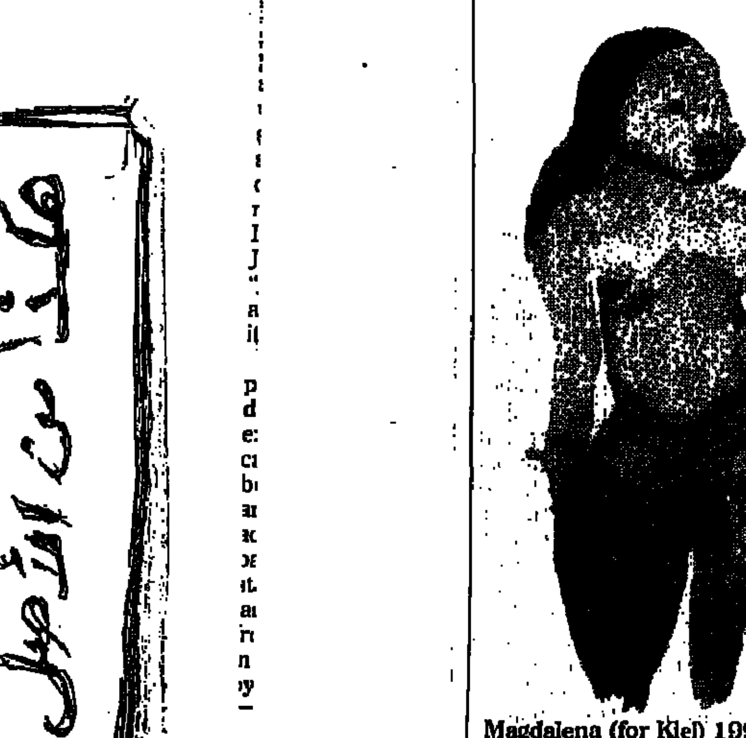
MARLENE DUMAS'S drawing show at London's Tate Gallery (until June 30) is about love, sex, bodies, babes, illness, Jesus and God. Dumas, who has shown in Britain before, but not to enough notice, is one of the most interesting figurative painters to have emerged in Europe since the 1970s. Her work is hugely enjoyable, by turns funny, brave and revealing, and is brilliantly executed. Her drawings of heads and figures float on the white paper with the brevity and exactitude of a perfectly chosen single word.

Dumas's drawings have always complemented and been given as much status as her paintings. She has a great touch, using old-fashioned brush and wash to describe God as a blob, Jesus as a perfect lover and to produce endless groups of large-scale portrait heads, full-length nude studies and an alarmingly hirsute erect penis.

On this last drawing she has written: "There was a girl that when she was young thought it was all covered in hair." Dumas, who lives in Holland, was brought up in the Dutch Reformed Church in Cape Town, South Africa, and her rendering of English is as odd-ball and unnerving as her work. A strict Protestant upbringing, and the racism of her country, led her to focus on sex, religion and the colour of skin. Once, she painted a black woman in a white face-pack, and her large-scale figure paintings in the Netherlands Pavilion at the Venice Biennale last year featured black supermodel Naomi Campbell.

Her drawings are loosely washed-in, tonally precise masses and silhouettes, fleshed out and given form with bleeds of ink. It is a speedy, hit-and-miss technique which communicates the vitality. She manages a surprising range and variety of touch, and an ability to depict not only flesh, but also to give her figures and faces a great deal of emotional range and character. In one series, Chlorosis (Lovesick), she depicts 24 male and female heads, some with lascivious, open mouths, others disconsolate, lovelorn and lost in self-reflection. In Jesus Serene we find 21 heads of Christ: a cliché long-hair blonde Jesus, a woman Jesus with a goatee, an adult baby Jesus, Jesus As The Perfect Lover and art-historical Jesuses — Romanesque, Medieval Flemish, Gothic and modern.

Sometimes Dumas homes in on more difficult territory, depicting a woman as a purple-faced victim slumped, bruised and damaged, in a corner. In What Ever Happened To The Greeks we get a between-the-legs view of a hairy old Greek god gazing down at the tip of his own ejaculating penis. An apt drawing for the Tate, and a wry coda to a memorable show.



Magdalena (for Kiel) 1995 by the South African Marlene Dumas.

Hell for leather

CINEMA
Derek Malcolm

NOT EVEN the most stringent critic could attack Richard Loncraine's Richard III as a heritage movie. This screen adaptation of Richard Eyre's and Ian McKellen's ground-breaking stage adaptation goes hell for leather against the tone of most period pieces. It turns Shakespeare into a screenwriter and the play itself into a truly cinematic political thriller.

It doesn't entirely work. There are times when one would be grateful for more of the text and a less self-consciously daring use of what is left of it. Was it really necessary to have the hunchback king deliver one of the play's most familiar lines as he pees in the gents? Or screaming for a horse while riding a recalcitrant Jeep?

Perhaps it was, if only to prove that the Bard had a well-developed sense of humour even as he bestrode the heights of melodrama. But he might occasionally turn a little in his grave at the film's racier flights.

Those who dread Shakespeare in the cinema, however, may disagree. Almost anything is permissible to prevent a worthy boredom settling in on the screen. Forthcoming screen productions of Hamlet and A Midsummer Night's Dream, please note.

The other problem of this otherwise commendably audacious and on the whole successful film is that Eyre's stage production, which used the original text merely as a starting point, has been truncated even further to keep the film short, sharp and pacy enough to satisfy even action-movie freaks.

But let us not complain. The thirties setting works well — showing what might have happened if a British Hitler had brokered his way savagely to power. And the film's very moderate budget allows Loncraine and Peter Bizou, his cinematographer, bravely to invent visual ruses, such as using St Pancras station and the Shell building in London, rather than expensive sets.

Above all, there is McKellen's triumphantly watchable Richard, a vile and psychotic despot whose mother (Maggie Smith as an imperious old Duchess of York) loathes him as a runt but who, despite everything, seems oddly vulnerable and at times almost likeable. You certainly laugh with him on occasion, as he exploits the gullibility of those around him, rather like a salesman selling duff insurance policies to pensioners.

He has never before come close to such a riveting kind of screen performance. No praise can be too high for this transmogrification from theatrical knight into fully fledged film star. McKellen's busy, light-footed performance strikes very few false notes, right down to the old and usually self-conscious dodge of addressing the audience via the camera.

Kristin Scott-Thomas proves an almost equally compulsive Lady Anne, courted by Richard in the mortuary where her previous husband lies dead at his hands. The Americans in the cast fare less well, being largely unable to get their tongues around what remains of the text with more than vaguely adequate conviction.

Principally, though, more than a measure of praise must go to Loncraine, who has entered into the spirit of a dashing enterprise with considerable skill, moving it along at a good pace, and, in the end, producing a parable about power that suggests Richard is not just a Hollywood villain who gets his just deserts but simply a symptom of what is wrong with a decadent and corrupt society.

A touch of evil . . . Stage actor Ian McKellen transforms himself into a film star as Richard III

Where East meets West

SINGAPORE FILM FESTIVAL
Derek Malcolm

THE JURY at last month's Singapore's ninth International Film Festival gave a career prize to the great Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-hsien, chose as best director Edward Yang, another film-maker from Taiwan, and then heard, at the first official conference between the critics of East and West, that neither man had enjoyed much success in Taiwan itself.

Mahjong, a study of the materialism of Taiwanese youth, which won Yang his award, is a case in point. Yang risks losing so much that he has decided not even to attempt a cinema release in his home territory. Instead, he will try to sell the film in the rest of Asia and the West.

Here lies the rub for Eastern film-makers. Despite festival successes abroad — Eastern films have won all three major European festivals within the past three years — and a genuine feeling that Eastern films are among the best being made today outside Hollywood, these film-makers face a precarious future in their own countries.

What the conference discovered was that independent film-makers from both East and West suffered from roughly the same problems — a lack of government structures to encourage finance, and chronic distribution and exhibition problems.

Eastern film-makers often faced the further difficulties of censorship and a suspicion that any serious topic would be anathema to a film-going public which, in the East as well as the West, is flocking to Hollywood movies.

Faced with these problems, generally considered to be insoluble without either private or public sponsorship, the critics reluctantly decided that writers on film should involve themselves as much in film politics as in art, organising lobbies where necessary.

Accordingly, the conference expressed strong support for the Singapore festival, which struggles on a tiny budget to promote Eastern as well as international films and succeeds in drawing large audiences into cinemas which usually show commercial Hollywood or Chinese-speaking films.

Two factors may help. One is the now precarious nature of the Hong Kong festival, hitherto regarded as the premier event for Eastern films but unlikely to remain so under the tutelage of mainland China. The other is the Singapore government's stated intention to try to make the city as much a cultural as a business centre within a decade.

Even though there is no indigenous film industry in so small a republic, a genuine Singaporean film — Eric Khoo's Mee-Pok Man — was successfully shown at the festival last year, and reached more than a dozen festivals in the West. Made for a tiny budget and given a restricted certificate because of its subject matter (the obsession of a poor noodle-seller for a sought-after model), it also had a considerable success in Singapore itself.

Now Khoo is making another film, and dozens of short films are produced for special, well-sponsored prizes at the festival. Something is clearly stirring. But unless the Singapore government acts quickly, the opportunity presented by Hong Kong's uncertain future could be missed.

Heirs and graces

THEATRE
Michael Billington

DO WE still want a monarchy in Britain? A question largely ignored in the House of Commons is now eagerly debated on the stage of the Birmingham Rep in Peter Whelan's **Divine Right**. But, although it's a fascinating state-of-the-nation play, the paradox is that Mr Whelan, an avowed republican, leaves you feeling strangely sympathetic to the beleaguered royals.

His scenario has an initial plausibility. The year is 2000. The Queen still reigns, New Labour is in power and Prince Charles decides to abdicate his right of succession. As the republican movement gathers steam, Prince William, somewhat less probably, evades his security men, puts on a disguise and goes on a private walkabout through his future kingdom. What he sees leads him to the inexorable conclusion that the English especially are an uncertain people who cling to monarchy to give them "a pseudo-identity": accordingly, with the royal family's agreement, he steps down to make way for a "a Parliamentary Head of State".

Whelan is writing a play, not a manifesto. But, in his determination to be fair to all sides, he leaves you feeling that there may be a case for monarchy after all. The young Prince is seen not as a calculating schemer like Shakespeare's Hal in Eastcheap but as a troubled charmer with a genuine sense of national responsibility. And the republicans — represented by a fractious alliance of a leftwing Labour MP, a meritocratic Tory and an Irish businessman — are so internally divided that they cannot decide whether they want a figurehead, a moral watchdog or someone with executive power.

The very act of dramatising the monarchy seems to produce an intuitive empathy. The young Prince, played with an astonishing mix of shyness and assurance by William Mannering, is much the most compelling character on stage: capable of handling probing TV interviewers and angry republican teachers, yet filled with agonising self-doubt. In fact, Whelan seems to have more of a problem with his potential subjects: the skinhead, Union Jack-toting fascists the Prince meets on the road carry little brutish conviction and suggest that the royals may not be the only ones out of touch.

Yet it's a bracing play not least because it rises above royal tittle-tattle to put on stage serious constitutional arguments about the monarchy. An angry teacher goes on television to remind us that the monarchy is curiously exempt from the laws against racial, sexual and religious discrimination, and the Irish entrepreneur quotes Disraeli's point that deference has been built into the English character since the Norman conquest.

I doubt that the play will change anyone's mind on the key issue; its very effectiveness as drama invalidates it as propaganda. But it was good to hear a Birmingham audience cheering a state-of-the-nation play in the Hare and Edgar tradition. It is a serious play on a serious subject.

But Whelan's skill as a dramatist subverts his own intentions. He clearly sets out to prove that the monarchy is an anachronism that we use to conceal our national uncertainty. What he actually shows is that the republican movement lacks a coherent political agenda and that heirs to the throne, in their isolation and political impotence, are hauntingly tragic figures.

Wallace Shawn's new play, **The Designated Mourner**, is a minimalist work not unlike My Dinner With Andre: no action, no instant narrative, just talk. Yet it is an extraordinary and haunting piece about the nature of America: in particular about the contest between an isolated patrician culture and an answering spiritual fascism.

We are greeted at London's Cottesloe, in David Hare's production, by a long trestle-table laden with books. Behind the table sit three characters who address us and occasionally each other. Jack is a graduate who has always feigned an interest in Rembrandt and poetry but who is plagued by his own insecure sense of identity. Alongside him sit his wife, Judy, and his famous father-in-law, Howard, who have always moved effortlessly through the rarefied world of literature, the arts, and the finer products of Western civilisation.

Jack seems to conjure up the memory of the other two and it gradually emerges that he is the designated mourner at the death of their particular world. We realise that the despised underclass — what a sociologist once called the "admass" — has revolted against the élitist values of its privileged superiors. Howard, Judy and their kind have been imprisoned, blood has flowed in engulfing rivers, people have been executed. Shawn, in fact, envisions an apocalyptic world which has seen what Jack calls "the disembowelling of the over-bowelled".

WHAT is remarkable about Shawn's play, or series of intercut monologues, is its evenness of tone and sense of historical determinism. Shawn recognises the value of high culture yet condemns those who hug it to themselves as if it were their exclusive personal property. He also understands the deprivation of those who are locked out of the secret garden, yet bewails the descent into barbarism of a society where "everyone on earth who could read John Donne was dead".

Shawn denies us many of the conventional satisfactions of drama, but what he has to say is crucially important: that we live in a world that preserves high culture for the few, that is leading to a dumbing-down of the mind and coarsening of the spirit, and that is poised on the brink of a return to the Dark Ages. His prime target is clearly America with its protected oases of cultures in a desert of commercialism; but almost everything he says is horrifically relevant to modern Britain.

It's a demanding play but one's attention is held by the fine acting of Mike Nichols as Jack, finally breaking down into tear-sodden regret for what is lost, by Miranda Richardson as his wife, cocooned in her own world of finer feelings, and by David de Keyser as the father-in-law who represents the insulated smugness of the poetic sensibility.

As a play, it takes its time; but what Shawn has written is certainly an unnerving tract for our times that equates spiritual and political fascism.

Gumshoe who stuck to it

Ian Thomson

Allan Pinkerton: The Eye Who Never Slept
by James Mackay
Mainstream 256pp £20

A *GOOD* private eye should always look for two things: his entrance to an inquiry and, above all, his exit. Danny Morgan, a foot-plodding sleuth from south London, failed to find the right way out. On the night of March 30, 1987, he was found dead in a Sydenham car park with an axe in the back of his head. Morgan's murder recalled a Hollywood dime novel — his Rolex watch was stolen, but £1,000 left in a trouser pocket. Debt-collection money? No one can tell because the axe-wielding man (or woman) is still at large.

For Britain's 4,000 or so other private detectives, the message is clear: snoop with caution, or you'll end up in an alley with the cats looking at you. Gumshoes the world over owe much to the ace shadow man Allan Pinkerton. His company motto — "We Never Sleep" — was printed above a wideawake eye.

Founded in Chicago in 1850, the Pinkerton National Detective Agency was the first of its kind; it trailed outlaws across the Wild West and into the jungles of Central America. Pinkerton devised many of the undercover and surveillance techniques still used today. He infiltrated Confederate lines in the service of Abraham Lincoln and even foiled a plot on the president's life.

In this rollicking biography, James Mackay relates how an op was sent down to Dixie during the Civil War, posing an an English aristocrat on a cotton-buying trip. With his suspect accent, "Lord Tracy" must have been as easy to spot as a kangaroo in a dinner jacket. But the sleuth did gather the vital military intelligence he was after.

Allan Pinkerton was born in 1819 in the Gorbals area of Glasgow, where he scraped a pittance making beer barrels. Coopering soon gave way to Chartism as Pinkerton got mixed up in the radical working-class movement.

On the run from the law, he emigrated to America; that's the romantic myth. But, as Mackay points out, the Glaswegian had probably come to the sad conclusion, like so many before him, "that there was no future in remaining in Scotland".

Pinkerton settled in Dundee, Illinois, where he was soon appointed deputy-sheriff. Politically, the young man's heart was usually in the right place. Working for Abraham Lincoln, he kept tabs on Copperheads (northerners who secretly sympathised with the South), harboured runaway slaves and even tried to rescue the abolitionist John Brown from the gallows.

Pinkerton was grievously upset by the assassination of Lincoln (Dashiell Hammett could have told him: never become emotionally involved with your client). Many, however, thought there was no more warmth to him than the burn of a hangman's rope. Throughout the 1870s in Pennsylvania, Pinkerton brutally stamped out the Molly Maguires, a secret society of Irish miners. This biography claims Pinkerton hounded the militants to their death because they were involved in murder, not because of their industrial disputes.

The Pinkerton Agency got a bad name for strikebreaking. In 1917, it hired Dashiell Hammett himself, then a hopeful young op, to safeguard scab workers who crossed picket lines. These had been set up in Montana by International Workers of the World. To his horror, Hammett was offered $1,000 by a mining company director to kill an agitator. Later that night, the worker was lynched with three other men. Pinkerton died in 1894, before Hammett's time, but he might have recognised the tactics. Hammett gets no mention here, which is odd. One of the suspects he tailed for the Pinks became the model for Caspar Gutman, the flabby villain in The Maltese Falcon.

Today, Pinkerton Security Services is a billion-dollar worldwide organisation with offices in 20 countries, including the People's Republic of China. But the ops no longer frisk a joint; they bug it.

Speaking in tongues

Linton Kweel Johnson

Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage
ed Richard Allsop
Oxford 697pp £50

THE POOR performance of Jamaican students in the English examinations of the Caribbean Examination Council recently prompted a leading Caribbean educationist to call for the teaching of English as a foreign language in Jamaica. This request is not so outrageous as it seems when one considers that while the official language of Jamaica and other Caribbean states of the Commonwealth is English, the vast majority of Caribbean people speak a different tongue.

Richard Allsop's pioneering Dictionary Of Caribbean English Usage is a timely response to this paradox. It is the first attempt at a systematic inventory of Caribbean English usage on a regional basis, covering an area with population of 6 million speakers, stretching from Belize to the Bahamas to Guyana.

The vocabulary of Caribbean English, he says, consists of a "core" of English words with inputs from African, American, Indic, Amerinidan, Chinese and European sources.

There are lots of fascinating discoveries to be made here. For example, the fruit they call "ginnep" in Jamaica is called "akee" in Barbados, St Lucia and St Vincent. But "ackee" in Jamaica is an entirely different fruit, cooked with salted codfish.

The more nationalistic Jamaican may become indignant on discovering "tampi", the Grenadian and Trinidadian word for marijuana, but no "ganja", its Jamaican equivalent. And why has Jamaica been left out of the list where the word "merino" or "marina" is used for sleeveless vest?

But these niggles are few and in no way detract from Allsop's considerable achievement. This important work will re welcomed by teachers and students. It represents a tangible contribution to the Caribbean vision of self.



ILLUSTRATION: NICOLA JENNINGS

Off the top of his head

Eric Griffiths

Bertrand Russell: The Spirit of Solitude
by Ray Monk
Cape 695pp £25

IT IS a philosopher's privilege to change his mind. Bertrand Russell exercised the privilege energetically with regard to all manner of things — his grand passions, the infallibility of D H Lawrence. One day he found out the Absolute existed: "I suddenly seemed to see truth in the ontological argument . . . So I became a Hegelian." Another day, he lost his love for his first wife: "I went out bicycling one afternoon, and suddenly, as I was riding along a country road, I realised that I no longer loved Alys."

His was a busy life (1872-1970) amid these regular enlightenments. Descended from a great Whig family, he kept faith with many of the creeds of that remarkable set, such as that people who were not persuaded of the rightness of his views were "naturally depraved".

He had a special penchant for other people's wives as mistresses. Some of these ladies gave him his way but yet stood up to him, as did Constance Malleson and Ottoline Morrell. Others went under. Ray Monk provides some grounds for thinking Tom And Viv had better be re-written (better not have been written at all) as "Bertie and Viv".

Nor was the first Mrs Eliot the only woman Russell may have had a part in driving mad. While in Chicago to lecture on "The Relation of Sense-Data to Physics", he had a one-night stand with Helen Dudley ("The impulse to foster creativeness was first aroused, and the rest followed. She cares for me, as far as I can judge, up to the full limit of a generous and lonely spirit . . .").

She crossed the Atlantic to be with him. But then he refused to speak to her, to let her knock at the door of his flat while he conversed inside with Ottoline, to offer her a glass of water and leave her standing on the threshold. He saw her last in 1924; she was stricken with multiple sclerosis, and he seems to have been surprised she had "dark, insane thoughts" about him.

He was a campaigner for women's rights, which may, to some minds, excuse his having wronged so many women. Just as his courageous denunciation of the first world war helps some forget why he denounced that war (because it was absurd for Englishmen to be allied with backward Slavs against our refined German cousins).

One thing shabbier than Russell's public conduct in these years, though, was Trinity College's stripping him of his fellowship because he had published his opinions and been prosecuted for them. That act stains the college. Not that Russell always followed out that duty, as his greatest pupil, Wittgenstein, did, unswervingly.

Russell longed to take the "now" out of "knowledge", because he had an old-fashioned devotion to the idea that only timeless truths are proper truths. But it was not often true of Russell's memory, for he lived his life like a man on an escalator who somehow manages to believe the only step on the moving stair is the one he happens to be on.

As Monk's extremely patient book shows, page by saddening page, Russell's mind whirled as dizzily as did his affairs. In 1906, "with a characteristic readiness to abandon views that he had previously considered definitively correct", Russell denied the real existence of propositions; he pronounced on "War: the Cause and Cure" in 1914, but "no sooner had he published this view, however, than he became dissatisfied with it".

As Monk's patient book shows, Russell's mind whirled as dizzily as his affairs

He didn't rush, he hurtled into print, even when writing the more analytical papers on which his professional reputation rests, papers which characteristically grind to an impasse, at which point Russell will appeal to something as "self-evident" or "instinctive". As Monk remarks with gentle dryness, "He spoke too soon": a motto for Russell's whole career.

Monk's heroically researched book covers the first 50 years of Russell's life; another volume follows. The pitiable tale he tells so well (what fortitude on his part to have read, and kept his cool while reading, so many of Russell's letters, letters which are often repellent in their torrential self-deceit, their cruelty to others) can be made to point several morals. I mention only one. Russell was trapped between two states of the English language, the one a non-existent "logically perfect language", the other that daily tongue we roughly get along with. We have every reason to wish to improve in some respects the way we talk and think, but Russell's wishes were exorbitant and headed straight for self-defeat: "I hoped that in time there would be a mathematics of behaviour as precise as the mathematics of machines." This yearning for "certainty and system", it turned out, could not be gratified by logic, and so the craving turned to less dispassionate sources for relief: "I want actually to *change* people's thoughts. Power over people's minds is the main personal desire of my life." Such power might be more rapidly achieved not logically but physiologically: "I am convinced that by studying the secretions of the glands we might discover how to modify character artificially."

What this dismaying slide from an apostolate of truth to dreams of eugenic tinkering shows is how intensely Russell was dissatisfied with life. The very words he had to speak gave rise to discontent. How else explain the fact that in his life, as in his writings, he commits himself incessantly to words his philosophical conscience should have felt a qualm or two about?

Near the beginning of this splendid book, Monk gives an anecdote which may recount Russell's first grappling with a philosophical question. He was combing the sea-shore with his Aunt Agatha at Broadstairs. "Aunty," the five-year-old inquired, "do limpets think?" "I don't know," she replied. "Then you must learn," he answered. If only she had told him: "We can't be sure, darling. But if they do, they do so *very slowly*." It would have done him a little good to cultivate the virtues of a limpet.

Eric Griffiths is a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge

Paperbacks

Nicholas Lezard

Flames in the Field, by Rita Kramer (Penguin, £7.99)

THIS STORY of four women working as undercover agents in occupied France is gripping stuff: all the more so because it is about women agents so there is an implicit (but never overstated) feminist slant to the book. The idea of female agents made many uncomfortable. The story is a considerable piece of detective work in its own right, and the acts of dedication and bravery Kramer uncovers are inspiring and moving; the ease and scale of French collaboration considerably less edifying.

Darwin: A Life in Science, by Michael White and John Gribbin (Simon & Schuster, £9.99)

A BIOGRAPHY which makes it plain how wonderful Darwin was: a scientist driven by a sublime theory to work with extraordinarily meticulous dedication, and to study more barnacles than is strictly good for one ("I hate a Barnacle as no man ever did before, not even a sailor in a slow-moving ship"), untainted by professional jealousy, brave in the face of his influential detractors despite the deaths of children and his own ruined health. Written in language a 12-year-old could grasp which, in this case, is no bad thing at all.

Coleman's Drive, by John Coleman (New European Publications, £10)

"ACROSS the Andes by Frog" is the bogus title given to illustrate a particular genre of travel book; its coiners may well have been thinking of this one, first published in 1962, in which Coleman undertook to drive from Buenos Aires to New York in a vintage Austin Seven (the "Baby Austin"), retracing Tschiffely's 1925 route. Except Tschiffely did it on horseback, a piece of cake by comparison. This is a modest classic; written almost artlessly, like John Major's brother's book, it belongs, as does its heroic car, to another age.

Exquisite Corpse, by Robert Irwin (Vintage, £5.99)

THE strongest fictional legacy at the moment is, it would appear, Nabokov's: here we have a Sebastian Knight-ish tale narrated, with extreme unreliability, by Caspar), a surrealist artist who falls for a genteel, petit-bourgeois woman — or so we suppose. Real-life characters, such as Orwell, have walk-on parts; as with Nabokov, little clues alerting us to the fact that someone is toying with us are dotted about the place, and there's a final chapter which obliges us to read the damn thing all over again. Intelligent fun.

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Crescent of fear

William Dalrymple

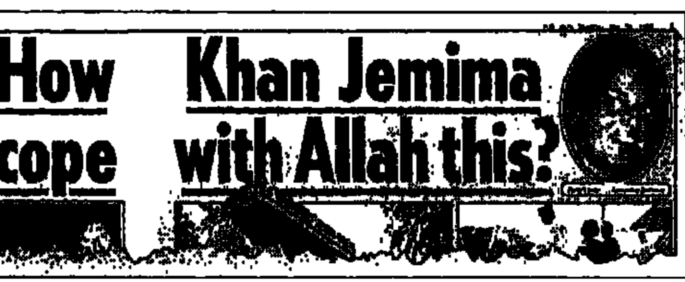
Islam and the Myth of Confrontation
by Fred Halliday
I B Tauris 255pp £12.99

WHEN the Oklahoma City bomb exploded, the immediate response of both the police and the media was that the blast was the work of Islamic terrorists. Men of "Middle Eastern complexion" were summarily arrested; there were calls for pre-emptive strikes on Middle Eastern countries, and a wave of attacks took place on both mosques and Muslims across the United States.

The British papers quickly followed the American lead. Although none quite sank to the level of "Camel jockeys killed your kids" (camel jockeys, as Americans call Arabs, are supposed to do to camels roughly what sheep shaggers are supposed to do to sheep), the British tabloids were not far behind: Today ran the banner headline IN THE NAME OF ISLAM, the Daily Mail said that the carnage bore "all the hallmarks of the work of Islamic fundamentalists with a fanatical hatred of America".

One might have hoped that lessons could have been learnt when home-grown American Christian crazies turned out to have planted the bomb; but when Jemima Goldsmith announced her engagement to Imran Khan a month later, another wave of anti-Islamic hysteria swept the British press. The Sun, anxious that Jemima would not be able to wear figure-hugging clothes in Lahore, filled its front page with the query "How Khan Jemima cope with Allah this?" Andrew Neil in the Sunday Times described Jemima "sleepwalking into slavery" while the London Evening Standard filled its front page with a picture of Jemima leaving San Lorenzo "after throwing off the shackles of her Moslem religion to enjoy a traditional hen night with her friends".

Soon afterwards the London Evening Standard quoted the Duchess of St Albans: "I have never understood a religion which accepts the right to murder," proclaimed the Duchess, explaining why she opposed a Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre in Kensington, which would celebrate such murderous habits as book illumination and calligraphy.



Muslim myths . . . The Sun newspaper's interpretation of Jemima Goldsmith's marriage to Imran Khan last year

Prejudices against Muslims — and the spread of ludicrously inaccurate stereotypes of Muslim behaviour and beliefs — have been developing at a frightening rate during the past decade. Indeed anti-Muslim racism seems in many ways to be replacing anti-Semitism as the principal Western expression of bigotry against "the other": while the thugs of the thirties would terrorise the unfortunate East End Jews, their modern skinhead successors go "Paki bashing". Nor is it just a Western problem. In France Le Pen may rail against Muslim North African immigrants and howl for their mass repatriation, but his outbursts look positively benign beside those of Rabbi Meir Kahane in Israel ("The Arabs are a cancer, cancer, cancer in the midst of us . . . let me become Defence Minister for two months and you will not have a single cockroach around here! I promise you a clean Israel!").

Yet perhaps the most worrying thing about this trend is the extent to which it has gone unrecognised and uncriticised, while intellectualised versions of this anti-Islamic revulsion have found acceptance in defence and political circles: Nato's former secretary-general, Willy Claes, once told the German daily Suddeutsche Zeitung that "Islamic fundamentalism is just as much a threat to the West as communism was."

In America Samuel P Huntingdon's notorious article on the "Clash of Civilisations" in Foreign Affairs made much the same sort of point: the West has defeated Soviet communism, now is the time to confront Islam. The piece was widely applauded by the American establishment, and was later approvingly quoted by the US Defence Secretary, William Perry.

Hence the great importance, particularly in light of escalating tension in the Middle East, of Fred Halliday's Islam And The Myth Of Confrontation, the first balanced and sober analysis of this new anti-Islamic tendency. In it Professor Halliday first sketches the roots and development of Western anti-Islamic sentiment, then calmly and rationally shows how the idea of Islam as a colossal block in opposition to all the West is nothing more than "a chimera", the rhetoric of the Teheran mullahs and their Hamas disciples notwithstanding.

In a detailed and rational exposition of the evidence, Halliday emphasises the extraordinary diversity of the Islamic world and shows how any notion of a unitary, aggressive Islam acting in concert against "the Judaeo-Christian West" is simply a joke. Islam is no more cohesive than Christendom: Christians in Britain are different from the Swedes, the Serbs and the fundamentalist evangelicals of the American Midwest; so the Indonesians are totally different from the Mauritanians, the Pakistanis and the Hizbullah. There is no such thing as "the Muslim mind" anti-democratic, terrorist, primeval in its behaviour, or however else it is portrayed — any more than one can talk usefully of the rational, peace-loving Christian mind. The Islamic world, for better or worse, is much like anywhere else in the developing world.

"The Middle East", concludes Halliday, "is not unique in the incidence of dictatorships, or of states created by colonialism, or of conspiracy theories . . . Material concerns, jokes, the pleasures of good food, and the horrors of political oppression, are theirs as much as of any other peoples in the world. The Middle East is not unique, except possibly in the myths that are propagated about it." One can only hope that copies of Professor Halliday's brave and important book make their way on to desks at Nato and the Pentagon before the West finds itself declaring war on a perceived threat that is more figment of prejudiced imagination than genuine foe. — *The Observer*

Clammy hand of friendship

Roy Hattersley

Fit to Govern?
by Leo McKinstry
Bantam Press 302pp £12.99

LEO MCKINSTRY'S qualification for asking, "is Labour fit to govern?", is the single fact that he was once a Labour activist but is one no longer. The inadequacy of that preparation is shown on every page. Compassion being essential to socialism, by the end I began to feel sorry for him. The attempt to stretch so small an idea over 300 pages must have been agonising.

To be fair to McKinstry, one fact must be registered in his favour. He admires Tony Blair. But since the Labour leader has survived Peter Mandelson's ideological embrace, he will barely notice the clammy hand of friendship which is held out by a man who believes that John Smith's One Member One Vote campaign was a mark of the late leader's complacency. Everyone else remotely engaged in politics would realise that it was a crucial part of the modernisation process that Neil Kinnock began and Tony Blair has driven forward.

The McKinstry thesis is that Tony Blair leads a party which is worthy of neither his ability nor his electoral appeal. The author struggles to justify that contention by a series of intellectually corrupt techniques. The most obvious is generalising from his own limited experience. Thus, having told his readers that he was once stupid enough to go out canvassing on Christmas Eve, he expects them to believe that the whole Labour party is made up of crazy fanatics with no other interest except the class struggle. A more reasonable conclusion would be that mindless extremists never lose their mindless extremism. They just change their allegiance: McKinstry is now an assistant editor of the Spectator and an occasional Sun columnist.

The chapters on local government seem to have been written in the hope of serialisation by the Sun. Enfield council is excoriated for employing two anti-poverty information and research officers, "each on a comfortable salary of £25,000". Newham is blamed for employing someone to help the ethnic minorities take up benefits to which they are entitled. Manchester is accused of spending £102,000 on an Immigration Aid Unit. I am amazed that they can provide an adequate service for so little.

McKinstry is a sworn enemy of constitutional change. Our "finest hour in 1940 was not the result of having a finely tuned administrative machine in government," he maintains. So there we are. If this country remains an elective dictatorship with unequal access to the law and ministers who are not constrained by any of the checks and balances common in other democracies, we may be able to beat the Luftwaffe all over again, recolonise Africa and pioneer a new steam engine.

Chess Leonard Barden

IF YOU'RE an ordinary club or social chess player, there's no point in getting involved in the latest grandmaster opening fashions. Tactical gambits and trappy variations, particularly when they arise by plausible and natural moves, are more likely to score you a point.

Winning Quickly With White, by Iakov Neishstadt (Cadogan, £10.99), could help score some energy-saving wins in your club matches or weekend tournaments. Miniature games are often defined as 25 moves, but Neishstadt, with an upper limit of 18, has collected 100 games ordered by opening and ranging from Victorian classics to 1995.

A companion volume on winning as Black gives this Sicilian Defence, where White's plausible choices led to rapid defeat for East Germany's No 3 in a postal game, and then, with identical moves, for a Russian in the Leningrad championship.

R Fuchs-K Honfi, Sicilian Dragon

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 g6 6 Be3 Bg7 7 f3 0-0 8 Bc4 Nc6 9 Qd2 Nd7 Bd7, Rc8 and Ne5 is normal. White's best now is 10 h4.

10 0-0-0 Nb6 11 Bb3 Na5 12 Bh6?? A thematic exchange, but a decisive error. 12 Qd3 is better. **Nac4 13 Qg5 e5!** This modest offer to swap queens wins the game. If now 14 Qxd8 Bxh6+. **14 Nde2 Bf6 15 Qg3 Bh4 16 Resigns.**

Traps and offbeat tactical openings are insufficient for strong county or club players, those with British Chess Federation grades 160-170 up, or for aspiring juniors. At advanced level, you need a professional reference source, and without a computer database this means Chess Informant, the six-monthly journal that top GMs consult.

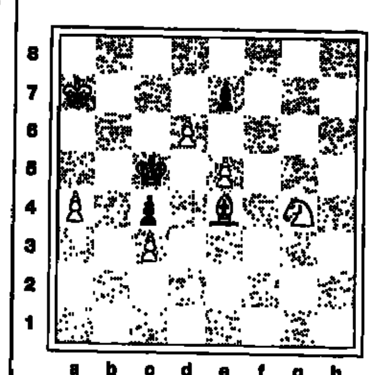
Chess Informant has about 600 games per issue, all from tournaments of the previous few months and with symbol comments by GMs from Kasparov and Karpov downwards. The journal is celebrating its 64 issues since 1966 with a £3,000, open-to-all competition to guess which 10 best games will be chosen by a grandmaster jury. Informant 65, just out, is available at a special price of £20, postage free, if you quote the Guardian or Guardian Weekly to Tournament Chess Supplies, 51 Borough Way, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 3HA (tel +44-1707 659080 or +44-181-959 1758). Here's a smooth win from Informant 65 by the world's best young player.

V Kramnik-B Gulko, Zürich, 1995

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 g3 b6 5 Bg2 Bb7 6 0-0 0-0 7 d3 d5 8 cxd5 exd5 9 Bf4 Re8?! Better a6! 10 Rc1 Bd6. **10 Nb5! Na6 11 Rc1 c6 12 Nbd4 Bc5 13 a3 Nh5 14 Bd2 Qd7 15 e3 Nf6 16 Bc3 Nc7 17 b4 Bd6 18 Qc2 Rac8 19 Qb2 Re7?** Ba8 avoids material loss.

20 Nh4 c5 21 Ndf5 Re6 22 Nxd6 Rxd6 23 bxc5 Rc6 24 Nf3 Rxc5 25 Bxf6 gxf6? 26 Rxc5 Resigns.

No 2419



White mates in three moves, against any defence, in this early 1927 problem by Genrikh Kasparian. The leading endgame composer has died aged 85.

No 2418: 1 Kh8! b2 2 Ng2 hxg2 3 Rh7 g1Q 4 Rxg1 mate. Traps include 1 Bd3? b2 2 Rga8 b1Q 3 Ra1 Qg1! or 1 e5? b2 2 Be4 b1B! or 1 Nf5? b2 2 Ng3+ Kg2 3 Nd2 h1N!

Adding up to trouble

Mark Cocker

IT WAS a fairly small individual, about 40cm long, with black patterning against a ground colour of olive grey, which identified it as a young male. Except when my shadow passed over, this tight sphere of coils was completely immobile and I could see right into its lidless, copper-coloured eyes.

A close, satisfying view of Britain's only venomous snake. However, it wasn't quite what I had been hoping for. In mid-spring male adders compete in territorial battles for the right to mate with sexually mature females, the combatants raising their bodies off the ground and often entwining as they attempt to force the rival into submission. Descriptions of this adders' "dance" suggest an exciting, fast-moving spectacle in which the normally shy snakes become completely unaware of their surroundings. And any fortunate human observer can get a ringside seat of the whole contest. Unfortunately, to date, I can't count myself among the lucky few.

Even in the supposedly environmentally attuned nineties, snakes remain the most ambiguous element in Britain's natural world. Despite all the evidence that adders have seriously declined, that they are extremely timid, that their bite is rarely fatal — accounting for many fewer casualties than bees or wasps — they are routinely slaughtered by people who think killing snakes is a public duty.

Britain's two other species, the Grass and highly threatened Smooth snakes, both harmless, are regular casualties because of the fear of adders. Even more bizarre, people will kill slow-worms, Britain's only legless lizard and a creature about as dangerous as a snail, just in case it is an adder in disguise.

I suspect Britain's horror at these creatures is rooted in our earliest Christian past. For their fundamental association in our religion with both the devil and evil is in striking contrast to their mythic status elsewhere in the world. For the Hindus, snakes hold deeply divine associations. The god Shiva, for example, is frequently represented in snake form. Similarly, the ancient Egyptians used snake images as a symbol for their Pharaoh, for the Nile and even the omnipotent creator.

The snake's habit of shedding its skin led to a widespread belief in its capacity for self-renewal and an association with the renewal of all life. Typically, the snake ceremony of the Hopi people from the south-western United States, in which male tribal members are surrounded by hundreds of rattlesnakes, even picking them up in their mouths, is an attempt to propitiate the elements and ensure the abundance of life-giving rain.

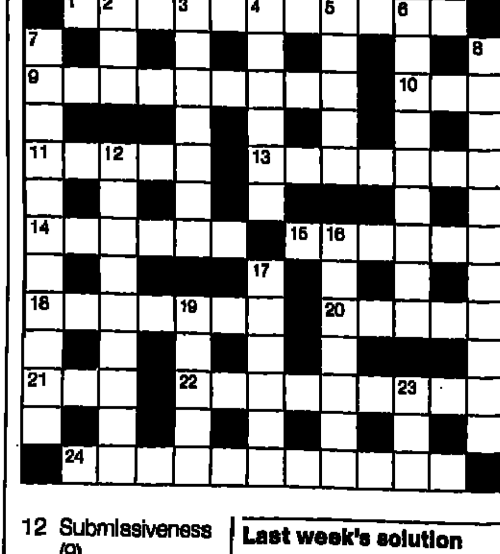
The Judaeo-Christian tradition was in opposition to those Middle Eastern cults in which the snake was a sacred symbol. To Christians the serpent became an emblem representing both the evil nature of such pagan beli[illegible] and its sinful adherents. This is [illegible] illustrated in the myth of St Patri[illegible] the man credited with introduc[illegible] Christianity to, and also banish[illegible] snakes from, Ireland. In ridding [illegible] land of its symbolic serpents (sin[illegible] never had the genuine arti[illegible]) Patrick was supplanting the ol[illegible] pagan cults with the word of Chri[illegible].

Strange as it may seem, I susp[illegible] it is these ancient reflex respon[illegible] to snakes that excluded them fr[illegible] legal protection, despite, in so[illegible] cases, extreme rarity, until 19[illegible]. The poor old adder even had to w[illegible] a further three years before it w[illegible] given similar rights, and even so you can kill them when in immine[illegible] danger of being bitten.

Watching the sleepy individu[illegible] uncoil before me as it retreated fro[illegible] my shadow, I wondered how oft[illegible] that clause would be falsely invok[illegible] to disguise Britain's ancient and ir[illegible]tional need to slay the serpent?

ILLUSTRATION: ANN HOG[illegible]

Quick crossword no. 312



Across

1 UK beauty queen (4,7)
9 Well-timed (9)
10 Brazilian port (3)
11 Telephone box (5)
13 Accomplish (7)
14 Exaggerate (6)
15 Acid neutraliser (6)
18 Holding on (7)
20 Young police trainee (5)
21 Manage — to escape (3)
22 Policeman — artist (9)
24 Buffoon (5-6)

Down

2 Mischievous child (3)
3 Caressed (7)
4 Chewy sweet (6)
5 Bloodsucking worm (5)
6 A "nanny" (9)
7 Seek employment (4,3,4)
8 Tennis score (4,7)
12 Submissiveness (9)
16 Sited — found (7)
17 Meeting programme (6)
19 Bring upon oneself (5)
23 Insect — competition (3)

Last week's solution

DISTRAUGHT
E E O N A R
ECSTATIC SEAL
A T A O T T
YELL AMNESIA
E F M O
BARRELORGAN
I S N A
CLIMATE FLAT
L I I S L I
LENT VENDETTA
T R A A O L
NEGLIGENCE

Bridge Zia Mahmood

I OFTEN wonder why it is that the most dogmatic people are often the most ill-informed. The other day at the club, I overheard someone telling his partner that "you can't bid Stayman over one no trump with less than 10 points!" For the benefit of that gentleman, and others who share his misguided beliefs, this week's column looks at the Stayman convention.

Your partner opens a weak no trump, 12-14. Your right-hand opponent passes. You have these three hands:

♠10943 ♥87432 ♦J6 ♣102

♠AKJ1042 ♥AQJ9 ♦3 ♣A2

♠AQ102 ♥K954 ♦J6 ♣842

What action would you take in each case?

If, on the first hand, you pass, because you have "less than 10 points", you are going to be doubled in 1NT by your left-hand opponent, who has a lot more than 10 points. Now, you may suffer a serious penalty, or your opponents may find their way to an easy game. Perhaps you should make a weak takeout into two hearts?

If you advertise the fact that you have a poor hand, your opponents may find their way to a game contract. Besides, if they double you in two hearts, don't you just know that partner will have a doubleton heart and four spades?

Don't be an ostrich. Bid two clubs, Stayman! You may find a major suit fit, but your main aim is to make it harder for them to enter the auction. If the worst comes to the worst and your partner responds two diamonds, you can retreat to two hearts, which is still a weak bid.

On the second hand, I hope you're thinking of a slam. It would be very timid to sign off in just four spades. You might force with three spades to set the suit, then use Blackwood. But there's no hurry. Your partner may have a four-card heart suit, in which case you may well find greater profit playing in that suit. Suppose, for example, that his 1NT opening is:

♠65 ♥K1072 ♦KQ52 ♣KQ10

Six hearts is excellent, six spades poor. Or perhaps he has:

♠Q65 ♥K1072 ♦AJ52 ♣Q[illegible]

You'll make seven hearts by ruffing a diamond in your hand for the 13th trick. But seven spades is pretty hopeless.

On the third hand the gentleman at the club, who needs 10 points for a Stayman response to 1NT, will happily make one. When his partner responds two diamonds, he will frown before bidding 2NT in the muted tones of a dying swan.

His side will go down in 2NT, of course, or 3NT if his partner accepts the game invitation — but that won't worry him in the slightest. He had 10 points, he used Stayman. What more could he do?

He could, and should, have done less. Knowing that there was a maximum of 24 points between the hands, and knowing that 24 points isn't usually enough for game, he should simply have passed 1NT. When you can tell that the limit of the hand is a part score, stay as low as possible.

Football Premiership: Manchester United 5 Nottingham Forest 0

United rampage to the wire

David Lacey

MANCHESTER United are almost there. Newcastle United's race is almost run. Far from going to a play-off, the Premiership may not even last the distance.

An initially nervous but ultimately commanding performance against Nottingham Forest at Old Trafford on Sunday, rounded off by one of Eric Cantona's more regal gestures, has left Alex Ferguson's team sitting on their haunches just short of the winning post and gazing back down the straight.

Newcastle are still in view after their 1-0 win at Leeds on Monday, but Manchester United's 5-0 victory has left them three points in front and six ahead on goal difference. Kevin Keegan's players have still to visit Nottingham Forest this week and, unless they win, the contest will struggle to stay alive on the final day.

Should Newcastle lose, Manchester United's third Premiership title in four seasons will merely be a celebration delayed. In those circumstances Newcastle would have to win at home to Tottenham by a margin comparable to that achieved at Old Trafford on Sunday simply to give Manchester United something to do at Middlesbrough this weekend.

Manchester United ultimately played like champions. They owed much to Giggs, Cantona and Beckham. Significantly they owed an equal amount to Scholes.

It was United's biggest home win since their 9-0 thrashing of Ipswich 13 months earlier. In that match Andy Cole scored five times. This time he watched on the bench as Scholes calmed Old Trafford's nerves with the first of two goals United scored in four minutes just before half-time, and then playing significant parts in another two without actually touching the ball.

For half an hour Forest's crowding of the midfield and stifling of space in the approaches to goal looked like frustrating United to the point of desperation. United's final passes were either predictable or awry. Giggs, having moved inside, with Sharpe wide on the left, was only a spasmodic threat.

But then Ferguson's decision to reverse the roles of Giggs and Sharpe, moving the Welshman back to the left, started to have an effect. In the 41st minute it led to United taking the lead. Lee, whose poor control as Forest's lone striker regularly set off United counter-attacks, gave the ball away and Keane immediately found Giggs in space. Haaland was outwitted on the byline by a drop of the shoulder and a wiggle of the hips and Scholes deflected Giggs's waist-high centre past Crossley with the natural scorer's aplomb.



Beckham: at the double

Three minutes later, Manchester United scored a second in extraordinary fashion. Beckham took an indirect free-kick near the left-hand byline and cracked the ball towards the net. Crossley, though he could have let the ball go by, instinctively punched it clear to Cantona, whose attempt at a volley from the right screwed back across the penalty area for Beckham to head in. Between the free-kick and the goal the ball had not touched the ground.

The rest, for United, was a victory parade. Nine minutes into the second half Cantona threaded the ball out to Irwin, Scholes dummied over the low cross and Beckham drove in his second goal.

After 69 minutes Giggs gathered a return pass from Cantona, spotted Scholes haring through the middle and, in trying to find him with a through-ball, scored himself as the pace of the pass beat Crossley.

That would have been enough for Old Trafford but Cantona was not done. He collected a ball from Sharpe, ran at a retreating Forest defence and trapped a rebound from Chettle on his chest before hooking Manchester United's fifth goal past Crossley.

"I'm mentally prepared to wait until next Sunday," said Ferguson, "but if anything happens in between I'll be grateful." He knows that a lot has got to happen now to deprive Manchester United of another championship.

Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

Home nations fall to friendly fire

IT WAS a disappointing week for the four United Kingdom national football teams taking part in friendlies. Three of them lost and the fourth could manage only a goalless draw, and between them they scored one solitary goal.

The Laudrup brothers were Scotland's undoing as Denmark swept past the visitors 2-0 in Copenhagen. Michael put the European champions ahead seven minutes into the game and 20 minutes later he set up his sibling teammate Brian to double the lead.

Northern Ireland went down to Sweden 1-2 at Windsor Park. Although the Swedes have not qualified for Euro '96, they looked a class outfit. Martin Dahlin put them ahead in the 21st minute and shortly after half-time Klas Ingesson made it 2-0. Gerard McMahon headed home in the 84th minute for the home side but the goal came too late to do anything more than give the scoreline respectability.

Two first-half blunders by Chris Coleman sent Wales crashing to a 2-0 defeat to Euro '96 qualifiers Switzerland in Lugano. Coleman, under pressure, headed a cross into his own net in the 32nd minute and then put his side further behind 10 minutes later when he brought Marco Grassi down in the area, allowing Kubilay Turkyilmuz to slot home the stop-kick.

With Euro '96 just weeks away, England were denied a morale-boosting victory by a combination of some fine goalkeeping by Croatia's Marijan Mrmic and wayward finishing at Wembley. England had five good chances, at least two of which should have brought them goals. Robbie Fowler, England's Young Footballer of the Year, missed an opportunity to grab the winner in his first England start as gritty Croatia held out for a 0-0 draw.

Meanwhile the Czech Republic inflicted a 2-0 defeat on the Republic of Ireland in Prague, the goals coming from Martin Frydeck and Pavel Kuka in an eight-minute burst just past the hour. It was the Irish Republic's fourth successive defeat.

JUST hours after being crowned Scottish Player of the Year by his fellow professionals, Paul Gascoigne proved it with a brilliant hat-trick to subdue Aberdeen at Ibrox and ensure Rangers' eighth successive Premier Division title. In England, Queens Park Rangers hammered West Ham 3-0 at home, only to take a drop from the Premiership because the rest of the teams involved in the relegation dogfight also won.

QPR join Bolton, whose 1-0 home defeat by Southampton sent them back to the First Division after only one season in the top flight. Taking QPR's place will be Derby.

BRIGHTON'S home game with York City at the Goldstone Ground was abandoned after 16 minutes following a pitch invasion by fans who pulled down the goal-posts, hurled wooden stakes and stormed the players' tunnel. Fans, who have already seen their club relegated, were demonstrating against ground-sharing plans with Portsmouth. Soccer fans also rioted during and after the Holland-Germany friendly in Rotterdam on Wednesday last week, where 47 arrests were made, and in Istanbul after the Turkish Cup final between Galatasaray and Fenerbahce.

FOLLOWING the footsteps of Brian Lara and Allan Donald as Warwickshire's overseas cricketer is a hard act to follow, but South African Shaun Pollock got off to a flying start. The 22-year-old pace bowler, who played havoc with England in the winter, took four wickets in four balls on his debut in the first round of qualifying matches in the Benson & Hedges Cup against Leicestershire. Pollock finished with figures of 6-21 off 10 overs as his side won by seven wickets.

A BRILLIANT knock of 125 by New Zealand's Nathan Astle — his maiden Test century — and a gritty last-wicket stand of 45 between Danny Morrison and Robert Kennedy failed to stop the Kiwis losing the first Test to West Indies in Bridgetown last week. The visitors, who made 195 against the home side's 472 in the first innings, were all out for 305 in the second. West Indies rattled up the 29 needed without loss to win by 10 wickets.

RONNIE O'SULLIVAN was fined £20,000 — the highest penalty in snooker's history — for assaulting an official, but escaped disqualification from the current world championship. O'Sullivan, aged 20, from Chigwell, in Essex, must also pay £10,000 to two charities, and has been given a two-year suspended ban following a disciplinary inquiry by the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association.

MIKE TYSON is not to be charged with sexually assaulting a 25-year-old beautician in a nightclub last month. Chicago police issued a statement saying they had found "insufficient evidence" to support the allegations made by LaDonna August. Her lawyer said she plans to pursue a civil action!

Football results

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: A Villa 0, Man City 1; Manchester Utd 5, Nottm Forest 0; Blackburn 1, Arsenal 1, Bolton 0, Southampton 1; Liverpool 1, Middlesbrough 0; Leeds Utd 0, Newcastle Utd 1; QPR 3, West Ham 0; Sheff Wed 2, Everton 5; Tottenham 1, Chelsea 1; Wimbledon 0, Coventry 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Manchester Utd (played 37, points 79), 2, Newcastle Utd (36-76), 3, Liverpool (36-69)

ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE: First Division: Derby County 2, Crystal Palace 1, Grimsby 1, Tranmere Rovers 1; Leicester 3, Birmingham 0; Luton 1, Barnsley 3; Millwall 2, Stoke 3; Norwich 1, Watford 2, Port Vale 1, Charlton 3; Portsmouth 0, Ipswich 1; Reading 0, Sheffield United 3; Southend 1, Oldham 1; Sunderland 0, West Brom 0; Wolverhampton 0, Huddersfield Town 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Sunderland (45-83); 2, Derby (45-79); 3, Crystal Palace (45-75).

Second Division: Blackpool 1, Walsall 2; Bournemouth 2, Chesterfield 0; Brighton 0, York City 0 (match abandoned due to pitch invasion); Bristol City 4, Rotherham Utd 3, Crewe 1, Oxford Utd 2; Notts County 4, Swansea 0; Peterborough 3, Hull City 1; Shrewsbury 1, Swindon Town 2; Stockport 2, Bristol Rovers 0; Wrexham 0, Burnley 2; Wycombe 4, Carlisle 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Swindon Town (44-90); 2, Oxford Utd (45-80); 3, Blackpool (45-79).

Third Division: Cardiff 3, Hereford 2; Darlington 3, Chester 1; Doncaster 2, Wigan 1; Exeter 1, Bury 1; Fulham 0, Gillingham 0; Hartlepool 0, Preston 2; Leyton Orient 3, Barnet 3; Mansfield 1, Colchester 2; Northampton 1, Lincoln 1; Rochdale 0, Plymouth 1; Scarborough 1, Scunthorpe 4; Torquay 0, Cambridge Utd 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Preston (45-83); 2, Gillingham (45-80); 3, Darlington (45-77).

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Premier Division: Falkirk 1, Hibernian 1; Hearts 1, Kilmarnock 0; Partick 2, Celtic 4; Raith 2, Motherwell 0; Rangers 3, Aberdeen 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Rangers (35-84); 2, Celtic (35-80); 3, Hearts (35-54).

First Division: Airdrie 0, Dundee 0; Clydebank 1, Hamilton 3; Dumbarton 0, Greenock Morton 1; Dundee Utd 0, Dunfermline 1; St Johnstone 1, St Mirren 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Dunfermline (35-68); 2, Dundee Utd (35-66); 3, Greenock Morton (35-65).

Second Division: Ayr Utd 1; East Fife 0; Forfar 4, Clyde 2; Queen of South 1, Montrose 1; Stirling 4, Berwick Rangers 3; Stranraer 0, Stenhousemuir 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Stirling (35-78); 2, East Fife (35-67); 3, Berwick Rangers (35-57).

Third Division: Albion 1, Alloa 0; Brechin 0, Caledonian Thistle 1; Cowdenbeath 2, Queen's Park 3; Livingston 3, Arbroath 0; Ross County 1, East Stirling 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Livingston (35-69); 2, Brechin City (35-63); 3, Caledonian Thistle (35-57).

Motor Racing

Pressure points for Villeneuve

Alan Henry at Nürburgring

JACQUES VILLENEUVE, the rookie from IndyCar, won the European Grand Prix — his first Formula One triumph — on Sunday under the most daunting pressure from the world champion, Michael Schumacher.

For half the 67-lap race here the German's Ferrari had tailed his Williams-Renault waiting for the slip which never came; Villeneuve scrambled across the line seven-tenths of a second ahead to take the chequered flag in only the fourth Formula One race of his career.

It consolidated his second place in the world championship, 11 points behind Damon Hill, who made a poor start from pole position, slipped to 11th at one point in the early stages and could count himself fortunate to finish fourth.

Hill just failed to catch his former team-mate David Coulthard, who scored McLaren-Mercedes's first podium finish of the season.

Villeneuve's win matched the achievement of the Brazilian Emerson Fittipaldi, who won his fourth grand prix, the United States, in 1970. Only Giancarlo Baghetti, who won the 1961 French GP on his maiden outing, has bettered this.

The 25-year-old Canadian, the reigning IndyCar champion, was less than overwhelmed by his achievement, radiating the assurance of a man who has included the Indianapolis 500 in his portfolio of victories. "It's a great feeling to win my first race in F1," he said, "and it's great for the whole team as well, because we've been competitive since the beginning of the season and finally we get it on the highest step of the podium. It's great because we've worked hard to get there."

Hill was troubled by a strange handling imbalance on his first set of tyres, radioing to his pit that he thought he had a puncture or a rear suspension problem.

The team brought him in for his first refuelling stop three laps ahead of schedule, and after surviving a brush with Pedro Diniz's Ligier as he squeezed past the Brazilian to take ninth place he got well into his stride again in the closing stages but just failed to catch Coulthard in the sprint to the flag.

Schumacher was well satisfied with second place in front of Ferrari's president, Luca di Montezemolo, who watched the race from the pit wall.

Meanwhile Di Montezemolo, having cleared up a misunderstanding over his relationship with the team's chief designer John Barnard, suggested that Coulthard might have cost Schumacher the race by briefly balking him on the 45th lap, although the world champion never mentioned a problem with the McLaren driver.

